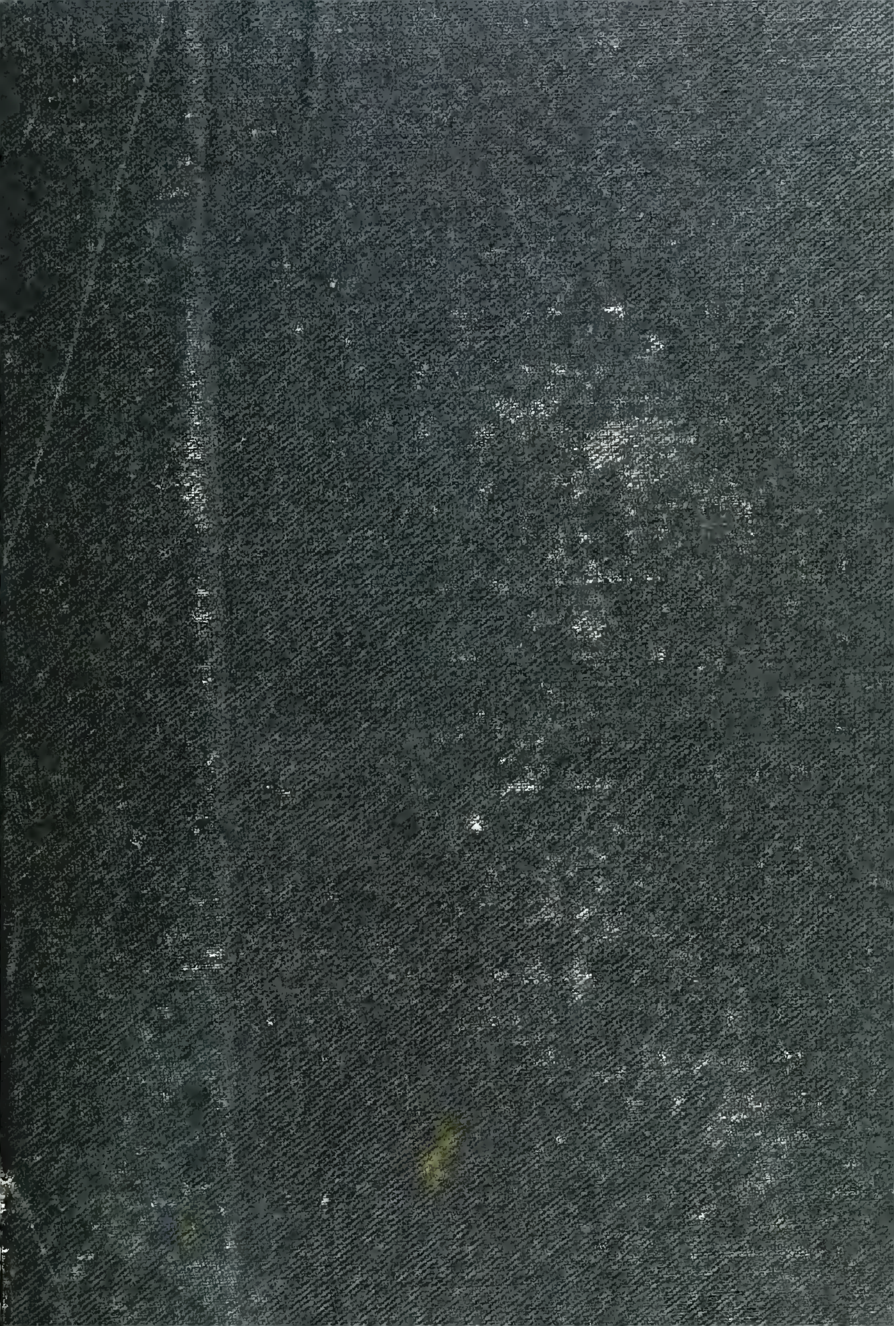

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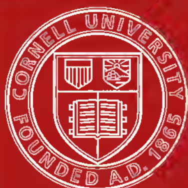


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Charles Lamb

# THE WORKS

OF

# CHARLES LAMB

## POETICAL AND DRAMATIC TALES

## ESSAYS AND CRITICISMS

EDITED WITH BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

CHARLES KENT

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

LONDON

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BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL

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E.V.

M [18?6]

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A casket of gems of small size, but of the first water: a book to be read, re-read, and loved. We can point to no book so purely charming. Lamb is the first of all our humorists. Taken as a whole he is incomparable.

*The British Quarterly.*

# CHARLES LAMB.

## A PREFATORY MEMOIR.

THE *Westminster Review*, as recently as in the October of 1874, while insisting upon the urgent need of an entirely new edition of the Works of Charles Lamb, deprecated in the strongest terms the notion of preceding them with any rearrangement of the well-known facts of his life, or with any fresh estimate of his genius and character. This rather startling remark was thrown out in the course of a luminous, and for the most part sagacious, survey of all the editions of Lamb hitherto published. Looking forward eagerly to some more carefully prepared issue of these works, the reviewer observed, with emphasis, "As to anything in the shape of disquisition or biography, a strong word may be said for their entire exclusion." I take note of this objection upon the very threshold, because I am desirous of not seeming to run counter to it out of sheer perversity. A disquisition upon the genius of this delightful humorist I admit at once to be absolutely superfluous. His writings require the pointing of no index finger to ensure their just recognition. They carry his meaning in a vase so transparent that its light shines through resplendently. A Prefatory Memoir, however, of some sort has appeared to me absolutely requisite by way of introduction. And it has done so for the simple reason that the facts of Charles Lamb's life, though doubtless many of them by this time perfectly familiar to the public by repetition, have again and again been set forth with a curious inaccuracy. The earliest and the latest of the essayist's biographers, for example, are alike at fault in regard to the very date of his birth. Barry Cornwall, when penning, in 1866, his charming Memoir of his old friend, asserts deliberately that he was born on the 18th of February. John Forster, when writing more than thirty years previously his beautiful In Memoriam of Elia in the *New Monthly* for February, 1835, though much nearer the mark —though, as the children would say, burning—in his conjecture as to the actual birthday, was still out, even though he put it a week earlier. His reliance for the moment was upon a mistaken, or, possibly, a blurred, memorandum in Charles Lamb's handwriting. "'Tis my poor birthday,' says a letter of his we have lying before us dated the 11th of February." Again, according to Mr. Procter, as, indeed, according to all the biographers of Lamb without exception, John and Mary and Charles "were the only children of their parents"—the fact being, as will now immediately be made plain for the first time in this Prefatory Memoir, that the family consisted of more than double that number of children. If beyond the flagrant errors thus distinguishable at a glance upon the very first page of Lamb's biography, yet further justification were required for the recapitulation, a little more accurately, of the salient facts of his life, that further justification might, surely, be found in the perverse deductions which of late years have been drawn by some from the either

confused or distorted records of his personal history—deductions casting a sinister shadow at the last over his bright intellect, and the slur of an imputed subjection to a degrading vice upon as sweet, and pure, and noble a nature as ever reflected honour upon English literature.

CHARLES LAMB, the youngest of the seven children of John Lamb, scrivener, and Elizabeth his wife, *née* Field, was born on Friday, the 10th of February, 1775, in Crown Office Row, Inner Temple. Other men of genius have lived there, but this is the one man of genius who was born within the precincts of the Temple. The substantial row of chambers in one of which, a hundred years ago, this bright-eyed Elia first drew breath, lies parallel with the Thames and Fleet Street, between the Temple Church and the Temple Gardens. If the parents of Charles Lamb had dreamt for a moment of taking the new-born infant thence, to be baptized at Saint Dunstan's, as the nearest church in the neighbourhood, in order to get to Saint Dunstan's they would have had to pass by the very porch of that yet older church in the Temple. There, obviously, in the Temple Church itself, a child born in the Temple would, in all probability, be baptized. Satisfied in my own mind that this must prove to be the case, I consult the Master of the Temple; and through his most kind courtesy my hopes are at once realized. Accompanying Dr. Vaughan into his library, I see him take down from one of the book-shelves a by no means cumbrous, indeed a rather thinnish quarto volume in beautiful preservation. It is the Baptismal Register for considerably more than a hundred and fifty years past of the Temple Church—a record hitherto overlooked by all Charles Lamb's biographers. As we turn the leaves, the very first name that arrests our attention is that of Lamb—one of the offspring of John Lamb, and Elizabeth his wife. There are seven entries in all to that effect, an interval of thirteen years having elapsed between the birth of the eldest of these children and the birth of the youngest :—

(1.) ELIZABETH, born 9th January, baptized 30th January, 1762.
(2.) JOHN, born 5th June, baptized 26th June, by the Rev. Mr. Dobey, 1763.
(3.) MARY ANNE, born 3rd December, baptized 30th December, by the Rev. Mr. Humphreys, 1764.
(4.) SAMUEL (the date of whose birth is unrecorded), baptized 13th December, 1765.
(5.) ELIZABETH (the first-born Elizabeth being obviously dead), born 30th August, baptized 3rd September, 1768.
(6.) EDWARD, born 3rd September, baptized 21st September, 1770.

The Seventh entry on the Register I give here verbatim from the certified copy made for me by the Very Rev. the Master of the Temple, a copy now lying at my elbow in his handwriting :—

**Lamb.** { CHARLES, the son of JOHN LAMB and ELIZABETH his wife, of Old Crown Office Row, in the Inner Temple, was born 10th February, 1775, and baptized 10th March following by the Rev. Mr. Jeffs. }

The above is a true copy of the entry in the Register of Baptisms in the Temple Church.

(Signed) C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D.,
Master of the Temple.

Crown Office Row, as these seven entries in the Baptismal Register show, was the birthplace not merely of the youngest, but of all these children, three of whom alone survived to their maturity. Until Charles Lamb was sixteen, the family continued to reside under those same roof-beams. Nearly

thirty years, consequently, must have run out during John Lamb's occupancy of a set of chambers to which—could only the house be identified!—an exceptional interest must naturally attach, as having been the birthplace and home of Elia until he was a stripling. It is especially tantalizing, therefore, to find that in the Temple itself no memory whatever has been preserved of the number of the house in which the Lambs had their abode during almost the life-time of a generation. Any one endeavouring to find it, now-a-days, saunters as bewildered down Crown Office Row, as the Captain of the Forty Robbers when he sought to discover the dwelling of Ali Baba. Time has done the work of Morgiana. All trace of any distinctive mark has long ago been obliterated. The family seems to have come originally from Lincolnshire. The "Annual Register" for 1835, indeed, (p. 212) speaks of Charles Lamb himself, meaning obviously his father John, as a native of Lincolnshire. Quitting his native county for London in search of employment, John Lamb appears to have settled down contentedly as the confidential attendant, or, as Elia exhaustively terms him, "clerk, servant, dresser, friend, flapper, guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer" of a well-to-do widower, one Mr. Samuel Salt, barrister and bencher of the Inner Temple.

By an odd coincidence, Charles Lamb's father is said to have greatly resembled David Garrick in appearance, while his mother is stated to have had so matronly and commanding an aspect that she might readily have been mistaken for a sister of Mrs. Siddons. A chirruping blithe little fellow in his younger days, must have been Mr. Salt's Figaro-Factotum: a clerkly domestic—a sort of valet man of letters—a Dodsley in all but wearing the livery! His solitary claim to the dignity of authorship, it must be added, however, was one thin quarto, entitled "Poetical Pieces on Several Occasions." It comprised among its contents an old-world picture of the life of a lady's footman in the last century, a History of the Patriarch Joseph, in heroic couplets, and—its writer's favourite effusion, his principal solace later on, when he was sinking into dotage—a childish, prattling little fable, after the manner of John Gay, called "The Sparrow's Wedding."

According to Mr. Procter's painfully accurate expression, Charles Lamb was born "almost in penury." He was nevertheless mercifully spared the treatment to which the children of the very poor are subjected, as he himself has touchingly described them, where he says that they are not so much brought up as they are dragged up. Until his seventh year was completed he passed his time habitually in that most sequestered and picturesque quarter of the old city, the antique and verdant south-west corner of London lying immediately between Temple Bar and the Thames. His playground was overshadowed at one part by the Round Tower of the Knights Templars, at another by the mulberry tree under the gnarled branches of which Henry VIII. traditionally courted Anne Boleyn. He loitered as an urchin across flagstones, and gravel walks, and grass-plots, that had been trodden but yesterday by Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith. His earliest delight out of doors every autumn was to see the blaze of chrysanthemums still at that season the glory of the Temple Gardens, or to watch the spray of the slender fountain yet tinkling there under the plane trees.

His earliest studies were over slate and horn-book at a little day-school, the masters of which were named Bird and Cook. It was situated, this homeliest of seminaries, in an out-of-the-way corner, up an alley, close by Holborn, leading from Fetter Lane to Bartlett's Buildings. Then it was, probably, when he was trotting about London hand-in-hand with his motherly little sister Mary (ten years his senior), that, child as he was, he flashed out the first gleam of the latent humorist. Sauntering with her through one of the city graveyards, where he listened to her reading one eulogistic inscription after another from the tombstones, he put to her, in his hesitating, childish

voice, very much after the manner, as one might imagine, of little Paul Dombey, the startling enquiry as to Where all the naughty people were buried?

Charles Lamb, on the 9th of October, 1782, being then well on into his eighth year, was presented to Christ's Hospital by Timothy Yeates, Esq., the Governor. Thenceforth, during eight winters and seven summers he was numbered among the thousand boys on that noble foundation. There he made his first friendships, notably the dearest of them all, that kindled in his breast by one he himself has spoken of as the "inspired charity boy," Samuel Taylor Coleridge, already, even then, poet, scholiast, dialectician, philosopher. Another schoolmate, Charles Valentine Le Grice, years afterwards, admirably depicted the gentle brilliant Elia of the hereafter, as he was at fourteen. By the help of those charming Recollections of Valentine Le Grice, as through a lens, we are enabled to recognize upon the instant that exceptional blue-coat boy! Undistinguishable by his garb, clad as he was like the rest of them in the long blueish gaberdine opening from the waist downwards, in the bright yellow stockings and yellow tunic, girdled about the loins by the thin red leather belt, he is seen at a glance to possess the characteristics jotted down by a pen more graphic than many a pencil—the crisply curling black hair, the clear ruddy-brown complexion, the aquiline Jewish contour, the mild countenance, the glittering eyes, strangely dissimilar in colour, one being hazel, the other having specks of grey in the iris, as you see red spots in the blood-stone. An amiable winning little creature, singularly sensible, keenly observant. Already people even in childhood, remarked in his gait, what became more distinctly noticeable in after years, namely, that his movements were peculiar and deliberate, his step being plantigrade. Added to this, as he himself has expressed it, he "stammered abominably." Partly, it may be, because of this infirmity, but chiefly, no doubt, by reason of his alluring and ingratiating nature, he was petted and indulged alike by preceptors and school-fellows. Insomuch was he treated with habitual tenderness by all around him that, as C. V. L. tells us, in spite of there being no one else at the school called Lamb, he never heard his name mentioned without the prefix of Charles.

Throughout his seven years' routine at Christ's Hospital, Charles Lamb as a rule, passed his two half-holidays every week in the midst of his old familiar haunts in the Temple. His especial favourites among the blue-coat boys were the Le Grices from Cornwall, Samuel and Valentine, and a certain mad wag of a Shaksperian enthusiast, James, or, familiarly, Jem White, who delighted in masquerading as Falstaff, and who wrote what he set forth as the Fat Knight's original correspondence, but whose chief hold upon remembrance now is, that his name and his benevolence have been both embalmed by Elia in his delightful Essay in Praise of Chimney Sweepers Beyond all his school-fellows, however, in Charles Lamb's estimation, was the one he looked up to, thenceforward, as Steele looked up throughout life to Addison, whom he had first known as head boy at the Charterhouse. Coleridge, it is true, was no more than two years the senior of Lamb, but two years at school are as a decade in after life. When the latter quitted Christ's Hospital at last, in his sixteenth year, on the 23rd November, 1789, the former had gone up with the brightest prospects to the University of Cambridge. From all chance of gaining an exhibition, Charles Lamb was debarred, however, by his infirmity of speech. When he threw aside the tonsure cap and the blue surcoat, he was in the lower division of the second class (in the Greek form, but not Deputy Grecian), having read Virgil, Sallust, Terence, Lucian, and Xenophon. He had acquired, both in prose and verse, considerable skill in the *nuances* of style and in the niceties of Latin composition. His love of literature had been already awakened, as it was afterwards kept alive, by Coleridge. Whenever the latter was up in town

from College, the two friends contrived to meet for the discussion of poetry and metaphysics. Their favourite rendezvous was at 17, Newgate Street, in a wainscoted back parlour, at the sign of the Salutation and Cat. There nightly, whenever they could come together, they talked on into the small hours, quaffing egg flip, devouring Welsh rabbits, and smoking pipes of Orinooko. Charles Lamb, however, had to buckle to betimes at the more serious business of life, instead of dreamily dawdling after the Muses, like one born to at least a competence. His elder brother by a dozen years, whom Mary in her juvenile poem of the "Broken Doll" apostrophized so significantly, even as a child, as "dear little craving, selfish John," was already enrolled as a clerk at the old South-Sea House. Thither, "where Threadneedle Street abuts upon Bishopsgate," went for a while, in the first bloom of his youth, the "gentle-hearted Charles," embryo poet, essayist, critic, dramatist, humorist. There he familiarized himself with the mysteries of tare and tret, and brought into practical use whatever knowledge he had already acquired of ciphering. Prior to this, immediately after his leaving Christ's Hospital, Charles had been allowed access to the library of his father's employer, the old bencher. There, among a curiously miscellaneous store of works, he had, to use his own expression, "browsed," literally in every sense of the phrase, at pleasure. His engagement at the South-Sea House was of comparatively brief duration, for on the 5th of April, 1792, he obtained, through the influence of Mr. Samuel Salt, his appointment to a clerkship in the Accountant's Office of the East India Company, at the old pro-consular palace, in Leadenhall Street, the site of which is now occupied by what is called East India Avenue. There he continued for three-and-thirty-years in regular employment. His stipend at the outset was barely seventy pounds a year, but it very gradually increased until it reached a maximum of £600 per annum, a sum placing him, not merely in easy, but, for one of his simple tastes, in almost affluent circumstances. Throughout the lengthened period during which he discharged his clerkly duties in the East India House, he was a very model of punctuality. Yet—doubtless, for the sake of the Lambesque humour underlying it—the whimsical story is told of his reply to a Director's complaint about his coming so late; "Oh, y-yes, Sir, but then you see I g-go away so early!" To those uncongenial labours of his, three-and-thirty years, the choicest of his life, were sedulously devoted, from the age, that is, of seventeen to the age of fifty. There, he was wont dolefully to insist—in the ponderous folios ranged upon those familiar bookshelves—his true Works were discoverable. Writing to Coleridge from a desk, the wood of which sometimes entered his soul more piercingly than iron, he said, in allusion to his unsympathetic surroundings, "Not a soul loves Bowles here; scarce one has heard of Burns; few but laugh at me for reading my Testament: they talk a language I understand not; I conceal sentiments that would be a puzzle to them. I can only converse with you by letter, and with the dead in 'their books.'" Yet, in the intervals of toil, even there, in Leadenhall Street, he had his golden fancies. As a Sonneteer, as a Story-teller, as a Critic, having an exquisite relish for nearly everything that is best in literature, but above all as an Essayist whose subtle combination of the humorous with the pathetic has ever since been recognized as simply incomparable, he contrived, not only to make a sunshine in that shady place, but to sweeten existence for himself even under the weight of a calamity as dreadful as any imagined by Dante in the darkest circle of his Purgatorio.

That calamity descended upon him in the autumn of 1796. It sprang directly from the taint of madness lurking in the blood of the family. Nine months previously, he himself for six weeks together, at the turn of the year 1795-96, had succumbed to its terrible influence. Placed under restraint in a lunatic asylum at Hoxton, he had been released at the end of that interval with the balance of his mind completely restored. He returned to his desk-

work at the India House, and to his home, which was no longer in the Temple, but in humble lodgings near Holborn. During the preceding twelvemonth, his father, who was already lapsing into dotage and decrepitude, had retired, upon a very small pension, from the service of Mr. Salt, the Inner Temple bencher. To add to the domestic misery, Charles Lamb's mother was to all appearance, permanently bedridden. His well-to-do brother John, of the South Sea House, as usual consulting his own interests exclusively, lived elsewhere in great comfort, having nothing whatever to do with the little household, except as an occasional visitor. An old maiden aunt (Hetty) who lived with the Lambs, added her atom of an annuity to their narrow resources, in their then dwelling place, No. 7, Little Queen Street, Holborn. Charles, the youngest of the group, not merely poured the whole of his small salary into the common stock but, when away from the East India House, devoted himself entirely to his afflicted parents and their surroundings. The mainstay of them all, the prop and pillar of the house, was Mary Lamb. She passed sleepless nights in attending upon her invalid mother and her imbecile father, and "lived laborious days" in seeing to the comfort of the household. In between whiles she toiled incessantly at her own needlework, besides superintending that of a little girl who acted as her assistant or apprentice. Wrought up to an unusual pitch of nervous excitement by a long continuance of these weary days and nights, Mary Lamb betrayed such evidence of having been injuriously affected, that, upon the morning of what was to prove for them all the fatal day, her young brother called upon Dr. Pitcairn, the physician, for the purpose of consulting him in her regard. The latter, as it happened, was away from home, going his rounds, so that the timely aid of his advice was unhappily at the moment inaccessible. The afternoon dinner-hour arrived for the little household, upon that deplorable Thursday, the 22nd September, 1796. What occurred may be found recorded, under the next day's date, in that year's "Annual Register." The particulars there given are the epitome of the evidence submitted on the morrow (Friday) to the Coroner's Jury, who brought in, without a moment's hesitation, as their verdict—Lunacy. The facts may be as quickly told as they were accomplished. While, with the cloth laid, the family were waiting dinner, Mary Lamb, seized with a sudden access of frenzy, snatched up a table-knife, and with it brandished in her hand pursued her apprentice round the apartment. Her bedridden mother, screaming to her to desist, she abruptly abandoned her first intention, and turning upon the helpless invalid with loud shrieks plunged the knife into her heart. Charles Lamb himself was the one—not, as the "Annual Register" states, in error, the landlord of the house—who wrested the blood-stained weapon from the grasp of the unconscious matricide. Swiftly though he did so, more havoc had been effected by the homicidal maniac before she was disarmed. She had hurled the dinner forks frantically about the room, with one of which the poor half-witted father was wounded in the forehead, while the old maiden-aunt lay stretched upon the floor insensible and apparently dying.

Charles Lamb used to say that his life might be comprised in an epigram. If so, it must certainly be an epigram having at the heart of it a tragedy. His witnessing so soon after his own confinement in a madhouse, a catastrophe thus appalling, one might have thought, must have unseated his reason anew if not permanently. Instead of which it actually seems, for once and for all, to have given it a perfect equipoise, and in doing so, to have elevated, ennobled, sublimated, the whole nature of that young day-dreamer of two-and-twenty.

At the first shock of this stupendous calamity, his gentle heart seemed completely overwhelmed. "Mention nothing of poetry," he cried out in an agony to Coleridge, adding that he had destroyed every vestige of past vanities of

that description. A "fair-haired maid," the Alice W—n of *Elia*, had just before captivated his imagination. He tore all thought of the tender passion from his breast, as though it had been a profanation. "I am wedded," he said, with pathetic significance, "to the fortunes of my sister and my poor old father." Upon the evening of that dreadful day, while preserving, as he expressed it, "a tranquillity not of despair," some neighbours coming in and persuading him to take some food, he suddenly sprang to his feet, from the poor meal he had just begun, with a feeling of self-abhorrence. "In an agony of emotion," he wrote to his bosom friend, "I found my way mechanically into the adjoining room, and fell on my knees"—observe, he mentions no name!—"by the side of her coffin, asking forgiveness of Heaven, and sometimes of her, for forgetting her so soon!" This incident, though so harrowing by contrast, is as tenderly affecting as that of Steele's first experience of death when his father died, he himself being at the time a little creature under five years of age. "I remember," he writes in the *Tatler*, "I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sate weeping alone by it. I had my battledore in my hand, and fell a beating the coffin, and calling papa; for, I know not how, I had some idea that he was locked up there." And thereupon, as he relates, his mother caught him in her arms, and, transported beyond all patience of the silent grief she was in before, almost smothered him in her embraces. However dissimilar in themselves, these are distinctly companion pictures—Steele as a child, with the battledore in his hand, pausing bewildered by the side of his father's coffin; Lamb, in an innocent torment of self-reproach, kneeling by the side of his mother's coffin, imploring God's forgiveness and hers for a momentary forgetfulness.

The unhappy matricide herself, immediately upon the close of the coroner's inquest, was placed under rigorous restraint in the Hoxton Asylum, where, but a few months previously, for the first and only time in his life, her younger brother had been immured. There, under rational treatment, her reason was soon restored. Although, upon realizing what had happened, Mary Lamb appears to have been at the first completely appalled, she speedily, and thenceforth permanently, found solace in the conviction that, for an act done thus in a state of mental aberration, she could be held in no way morally responsible. Her selfish elder brother, John, upon the plea of her being liable to these sudden outbursts of homicidal mania, was for having her, during the rest of her existence, kept rigidly in confinement. Charles, however, revolted from this proposition. Holding his sister to be quite guiltless, and yearning to her only the more tenderly because of her affliction, he entered into a solemn compact that he would take charge of her from that time forward, on the simple understanding that she was confided freely to his protection. For thirty-four years he held unfalteringly by that agreement. Until his own death came he was her devoted protector. His self-sacrifice in this involved his giving up all thought of love and marriage. Such was her chronic condition, that within two years from the date of her first fatal paroxysm he wrote these terrible words: "I consider her as perpetually on the brink of madness." Her insanity, in point of fact, was simply intermittent. It was of deplorably, and at the last of alarmingly, frequent recurrence. Towards her support, from beginning to end, her elder brother never moved a finger, never contributed one sixpence. Upon Charles Lamb devolved the whole cost and the sole responsibility. His first step, on her release from the Hoxton Asylum, was to take lodgings for her at Hackney. Thence he brought her back home, his income at the time being barely a hundred a year. His father, who had sunk in the meanwhile into a state of hopeless imbecility, passed away soon after becoming a widower. The old maiden aunt, Hetty, died a month later on. Brother and sister were then left entirely to themselves, their only pecuniary resources being, from that time forward, derived from Charles's clerkship. Narrow though

their means continued to be for several years—the increase of income at the India House being at the outset hardly perceptible—they sufficed. Their happiness in a companionship that was mutually delightful would have been complete but for its many disastrous interruptions. The premonitory symptoms with Mary Lamb were unmistakable. They were restlessness, low fever, and insomnia. When these became apparent beyond the reach of further doubt, he would get leave of absence from the office as if for a day's pleasure. And upon these occasions, the two afflicted ones might be met walking across the fields together to Hoxton, Charles carrying the strait waistcoat in his pocket in case of emergency, brother and sister weeping bitterly. Once, and but once only during this life of noble endurance a cry of anguish seems to have been wrung from him by the crushing weight of his responsibilities. Another death in the home circle had to be recorded. A faithful but tyrannous old servant (Becky) was lying dead upstairs. Mary, as usual, was away at the lunatic asylum. Charles was pouring out his heart to Coleridge. "My heart is quite sick," he wrote, "and I don't know where to look for relief. My head is very bad. I almost wish Mary were dead." That thought of faltering, however, was only for an instant. The awful load he had undertaken to bear was never once laid aside. Down to the very end the formidable ordeal of his life was passed with calm determination. Along a pathway that ended only with his grave, he trod the burning ploughshares.

Charles Lamb's career in authorship had its beginning in the very year which saw his home laid waste as by the fall of a thunderbolt. Then, in 1796, he came into his first battle in literature, as he himself expressed it, under that greater Ajax, Coleridge. FOUR SONNETS, included by the latter in a clumsily printed volume entitled "Poems on Various Subjects," published at Bristol, marked the first appearance in print of the small poet who was to grow into the great essayist. Another and more important volume of poems, published in the same way, provincially, for Coleridge, within the following year, 1797, comprised among its contents, in addition to a few lyrics from the hand of Charles Lloyd, a cluster of MISCELLANEOUS POEMS, which were announced in the preface as by Charles Lamb, of the India House. During the following twelvemonth, 1798, Lloyd and Lamb, gaining courage, issued from the press, together, in London, an unpretending little book of their own entitled BLANK VERSE. Small in quantity and unambitious in design, their productions passed not unnoticed. In the opening number of the now famous *Anti-Jacobin*, Gilray's pencil caricatured Coleridge and Southey with asses' heads, and Lloyd and Lamb as toad and frog respectively. There, too, in the July number, under the cynical heading of "The New Morality," appeared, among other audacious rhymes, the following apostrophe :—

> *Couriers* and *Stars*, sedition's evening host,
> Thou *Morning Chronicle* and *Morning Post*,
> Whether ye make the rights of man your theme,
> Your country libel, or your God blaspheme,
> Or dirt on private worth and virtue throw,
> Still blasphemous or blackguard praise Lepaux.
> And ye five wandering bards that move
> In sweet accord of harmony and love,
> Coleridge and Southey, Lloyd and Lamb and Co.,
> Tune all your mystic harps to praise Lepaux :

the probability being, as has been remarked, that Charles Lamb for one, up to that moment, had never even heard of the Republican charlatan. Another allusion was made to them in a precisely similar strain through a parody on Collins' "Ode to the Passions," called "The Anarchists," in the *Anti-Jacobin* for September :—

> See, faithful to their mighty dam,
> Coleridge, Southey, Lloyd and Lamb,
> In splayfoot madrigals of love,
> Soft moving like the widowed dove:

the first-mentioned of the four being yet further infamously denounced, elsewhere in the letter-press, as beginning a Citizen of the World, by leaving his poor children fatherless and his wife destitute: the scurrile satirist adding, "*Ex uno disce* his friends Lamb and Southey." Such at that time were the amenities of literature.

Before 1798 had run out, Charles Lamb had given to the world as his first prose work, his charming novelette, or miniature romance, "Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret." The name of his heroine he appears to have borrowed from a small volume of poems by Charles Lloyd, published three years previously (in 1795) at Carlisle. Speaking of this exquisite little story, Shelley, twenty years after its first publication, exclaimed in a letter to Leigh Hunt, dated 8th September, 1819: "What a lovely thing is 'Rosamund Gray!' How much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest parts of our nature is in it!" The child-heroine's reputed dwelling-place, it may be interesting to add, is still shown at Blenheim, as one of a couple of cottages near Healin Green, some two miles from Blakesweir.

From an exceedingly early period in his literary life, Charles Lamb's attention had been directed stagewards. His love of the drama, as his Elian Essay, "My First Play," clearly shows, dated from his very childhood. As a stripling he had penned what was probably his first work, the MS. libretto of a *Comic Opera*, still treasured up in the British Museum, and now published for the first time (*infra*, pp. 172-195) in this Popular Centenary Edition, together with facsimiles proving it to be unmistakably in Charles Lamb's handwriting. His love for the old dramatists, pre-eminently for Shakspere and his immediate contemporaries, as he afterwards, in truth, made plain enough to the world's comprehension, amounted to little less than a passion. He himself, as the eighteenth century drew towards its close, was labouring assiduously at a tragedy. In 1799 the writing of this five-act drama in blank verse was completed. As it was not published, however, until three years afterwards, more particular allusion to it for the moment may be judiciously postponed. Lamb at this period, it is worthy of note, moreover, was contributing in common with Coleridge and Southey to the Annual Anthology.

Early in 1800 the Lambs moved from 7, Little Queen Street, Holborn, with all its terrible associations—the site of 6, 7, 8, by the way, is now occupied by Trinity Church—to 45, Chapel Street, Pentonville. It was during his residence there that a tender Platonic fancy was inspired in his breast by the sight of Hester Savory, a pretty young Quakeress, whose memory upon the occasion of her premature death, three years afterwards, he embalmed in a lovely elegy. Tarrying but a few months in Pentonville, the Lambs, still in 1800, moved townwards, to 34, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, within three minutes' walk from their birthplace. As if this near neighbourhood to it were not enough, however, before the new century had dawned, they had passed once more, after an absence of barely five years from it, within the familiar precincts of the Temple, taking up their abode, as it proved, for nine years together, at 16, Mitre Court Buildings. It was at an earlier date than this that Lamb is reported to have written political squibs for sixpence in the opposition newspapers. At the beginning of 1800, however, Coleridge, on coming up to London, widened his field of operations in that way, by introducing him to the then editor of the *Morning Post*, Daniel Stuart. Lamb's frolic fun as an epigrammatist was always of the free-and-easy, or harum-scarum character. It was thus, for example, when he wrote in the *Examiner* on the Disappointment of the Whig Associates of the Prince Regent:—

Ye politicians, tell me, pray,
Why thus with woe and care rent?
This is the worst that you can say,
Some wind has blown the wig away,
And left the Heir Apparent.

Similarly, though here with savage scorn, rather than with good-humoured derision, he wrote, about this very time (1800), in the *Albion* his apostrophe to Sir James Mackintosh :—

Though thou'rt like Judas, an apostate black,
In the resemblance one thing thou dost lack;
When he had gotten his ill-purchased pelf,
He went away and wisely hanged himself:
This thou mayst do at last, yet much I doubt
If thou hast any Bowels to gush out.

The Tragedy, just now referred to as having been completed by Charles Lamb in 1799, was not published until early in 1802. Originally entitled "Pride's Cure," it was in the end called, more simply, after the hero of it, JOHN WOODVIL. Having been placed in the hands of John Kemble, with an eye to its production on the boards of Drury Lane, it was retained so long that the author at length applied for the manager's decision. He was thereupon quietly informed that the manuscript had been somehow lost—a cool suggestion being added that another copy should be sent in for consideration. Fortunately the rough draft of the play was still in existence. This having been fairly written out, the MS. was again submitted to Kemble, only, however, to be handed back a little later on, when the manager, according to his wont, bowed out the disappointed author, politely bidding him beware, as he did so, of that well-worn door-step, at the lessee's private entrance in Great Russell Street, which so many another aspiring dramatist, before and since, has found *facile descensus* rather than a *gradus ad Parnassum*. When the rejected tragedy was at length published, it was reviewed in a tone of the gravest banter in the third number of the *Edinburgh Review*, Jeffrey writing of it as evidently the work of a man of the age of Thespis! The reviewer, serio-comically, descanted, besides, upon the antiquity of Lamb's muse and language and versification, describing his rhetorical figures as having about them all the careless indelicacy of ancient manners.

Until the early part of 1809 the Lambs continued to reside at 16, Mitre Court Buildings, in the Temple. There it was they wrote together MRS. LEICESTER'S SCHOOL, to which Charles contributed three, and his sister seven, stories, purporting to be the history of several young ladies related by themselves. There afterwards they wrote in collaboration their well-known TALES FROM SHAKSPERE, fourteen being from the pen of Mary Lamb, and six from the hand of her brother. During the last year of their sojourn in Mitre Court Buildings, Charles produced, less as a paraphrase than as a prose epitome of Chapman's Odyssey, his admirable version of THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES, a work designed by him, and not unworthily, as a companion volume to Bishop Fénélon's Telemachus. Another work produced by Charles Lamb in 1808—one that was published for him by the Messrs. Longman—was his twofold masterpiece, in the way, that is, of selection and annotation, known as SPECIMENS OF THE ENGLISH DRAMATIC POETS who lived about the time of Shakspere.

Upon quitting Mitre Court Buildings, the Lambs settled down, hard by, for another interval of nine years, from 1809 to 1817, in the top story at 4, Inner Temple Lane; and it was during the earlier period of their sojourn there that they brought out together their POETRY FOR CHILDREN. There Charles, who was greatly enamoured with the locality, meant to have lived and died, though the abode, when dispassionately regarded, had, it is true, but small attrac-

tions. The apartments, as their occupant himself described them with an odd sort of gusto, looked out upon a gloomy court like a churchyard, adorned with three trees and a pump. The period of the Lambs' occupancy of these chambers, however, is considered by Talfourd to have been about the happiest in all Charles's life. There his Wednesday nights acquired their greatest lustre, and, it might even be added, a certain amount of celebrity. There he gathered about him his troops of friends—people worthy of that name, as being his intimate and congenial companions. The mere reckoning up of their names is like counting the stars in a constellation. The chief among them, however, need alone here be enumerated :—

Pre-eminent in Lamb's eyes, on the score at once of affection and of admiration, was Coleridge, whose *naïf* inquiry upon one occasion, "Charles, did you ever hear me preach?" drew from the irrepressible humorist the answer, "I n-never heard you do anything else!" He it was, also, that most dearly loved of all his friends, whom, at another time, he likened so irresistibly to a "damaged archangel!" Conspicuous among these friends, besides, was Martin Burney, to whom, as everybody knows, Lamb observed, in the middle of a rubber, "If dirt were trumps, Martin, w-what hands you would hold!" There, too, was Wordsworth, whose genius he so reverenced, yet whom he is actually said, once, in his freakish humour, to have shaken, not by the hand but by the nose, with a "How d'ye do, old Lakey poet?" Writing to him another while, in spite of Wordsworth's constitutional solemnity, "Some d—d people have come in, and I must finish abruptly," but adding quietly in a preposterous postscript, "by d—d I only mean deuced." Barry Cornwall, it was, another of these intimates, who drew from him the remark, in reference to some observation, evidencing a certain degree of smartness, "Very well, my dear boy, very well; B-Ben Jonson has said worse things, and b-b-better!" Crabb Robinson's announcement of his maiden brief, elicited from Lamb, in the same spirit of mockery, the profane ejaculation, "Thou first great cause, least understood!" Southey's indifferent lyric about a rose incited the wicked wit in a kindred mood to remark, "Your rose is insipid, it has neither thorns nor sweetness." John Rickman, Clerk of the House of Commons, another of these treasured friends, was referred to by Lamb, after a very different fashion, as "a fine rattling fellow, who has gone through life laughing at solemn apes; hugely literate: talking Greek with Porson, nonsense with me; fullest of matter with least verbosity." While of another intimate, Thomas Manning, Charles declared enthusiastically, "He discloses not, save to select worshippers; and will leave the world without any one hardly but me knowing how stupendous a creature he is."

The cherished companions of Charles Lamb were for the most part bookworms, critics, authors, and social oddities. Many were celebrities. A few were hardly presentable. His surroundings were of the homeliest, his habits completely unfashionable. Yet his Wednesday evenings (when he and his sister had their At Homes) were the delight of his own chosen circle, especially in the winter time, when the card-table was drawn out, and the fire crackling, and the long-sixes lit, the snuff-box ready for any one's handling, the kettle singing on the hob, glasses and bottle and cold viands within reach of those who cared for them. The familiar guests did what they liked, there, read or chatted, came and went as they pleased, books and needlework lying about—veritable At Homes, with a sense of slippered, almost of slip-shod, ease, and an utter forgetfulness of anything in the shape of ceremony. Every one took his part in the conversation. But among them all, as William Hazlitt tells us, "no one ever stammered out such fine, piquant, deep, eloquent things in half-a-dozen half sentences as Elia himself." At these times, according to John Forster's testimony also, "no one said such startling things as Lamb." Then

his quips and cranks were at their blithest, and his puns, squandered about *ad libitum*, running at times into the most fantastic extravagances. Many of his more brilliant *mots*, however, had about them the punster's doom of evanescence, as Talfourd wittily ejaculates in their regard "a moment *bright*, then gone ever!"

Towards the close of 1817 the Lambs again removed, and this time finally, from the Temple. Quitting the top story of 4, Inner Temple Lane, they took up their abode for the next six years at 20, Russell Street, Covent Garden. Their apartments, which were there, on the first floor, were situated over what was then a brazier's, what afterwards became a bookseller's, and what is nowadays, as it has been for many years past, a ham and beef shop. It is the corner house, the side of which looks out upon Bow Street, the site being that upon which stood, in Dryden's time, what was long famous as Will's Coffee House. A twelvemonth after this change of residence, there was published, in 1818, in two small volumes, the first edition of the Works of Charles Lamb, comprising among them, not only his moderately-sized collection of poems, his tragedy of John Woodvil, and his story of Rosamund Gray, but with them those masterly criticisms on Hogarth and Shakspere, which, issued from the press anonymously (in 1811) in the pages of the *Reflector*, until thus reprinted, with acknowledgment as his, had remained for seven years altogether unnoticed.

At the beginning of 1820, when Charles Lamb was completing his forty-fifth year, and when his intellectual powers were at their best and brightest, there came for him what he soon made plain to himself and to everybody else was his priceless opportunity. In the January of that year there was started by the Messrs. Baldwin, Craddock and Joy, in half-crown monthly numbers, *The London Magazine*. Its editor at the outset was Mr. John Scott, who had previously conducted, until its demise, the *Champion* newspaper. Under his supervision and guidance there was collected together a brilliant band of contributors. Hazlitt was the dramatic and art critic of the new publication. He there sketched the wonders of Fonthill Abbey, expatiated on the matchless beauties of the Elgin Marbles, and poured forth in a series of a dozen papers his radiant Table Talk. De Quincey there confided to the ear of the public his Confessions of an Opium Eater, and realized for the first time to many the inner marvels of the genius of Jean Paul Richter. Carlyle there produced his maiden work illustrative of the Life and Writings of Schiller. The translator of Dante, the Rev. Henry Francis Cary, there appended to Dr. Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" other later memoirs by way of continuation. Among the lyrists on the *London* were John Keats and James Montgomery. There, too, Thomas Hood wrote his first poem of any pretension. There Allan Cunningham recounted the traditional tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry. There trolled his simple ditties, John Clare, the Northamptonshire Poet. There flaunted for a while among the best of them, under the guise of an ex-officer of Dragoons, one seemingly of the curled darlings of Mayfair, who descanted vivaciously upon art, letters, and society, under the *nom de plume* of Janus Weathercock. This was no other than the atrocious miscreant Thomas Griffiths Wainewright, the murderer, among others, with the deadliest deliberation (after effecting insurances upon her life, to the amount of £18,000 sterling) of his beautiful young sister-in-law, Helen Abercrombie, whose assassination the scoundrel afterwards justified, with a curl of his moustache, and a lisping sneer, upon the plea that "she had such d——d thick ankles!" Lord Lytton has transfixed the reptile with his pen—like another scorpion added to a cabinet of horrors—as the Gabriel Varney of "Lucretia." So deceptive, however, was this dastardly assassin, even in the eyes of the most discerning of his brother contributors, that Charles Lamb could write of him to

Southey as "the light and warm as light-hearted Janus." Pre-eminent among this motley array of contributors, the pride and boast of the *London Magazine*, as he very soon came to be, was Charles Lamb himself, in his newly-assumed capacity as Elia the Essayist. Even here, nevertheless, in this greatest of all his literary successes, he can hardly be said, in a pecuniary sense, to have struck upon a golden vein. The largest amount of remuneration he ever received as Elia from the *London Magazine* was at the rate of £170 a year for two years together. Jocularly, he used to speak of himself as the Publishers' ruin, exclaiming once in a letter to Procter, "Damn the age! I'll write for antiquity!" Between the August of 1820 and the November of 1822 he had contributed as many as twenty-seven Elian Essays to the *London Magazine*. These, with another reprinted from the *Indicator*, were, in 1823, collected together, and issued from the press as a substantive publication. The magazine had long before this passed into the hands of the Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, as its publishers and proprietors. At uncertain intervals Charles Lamb continued to write in its pages under his favourite signature; notably after the commencement of a new and enlarged series of the *London* at the beginning of 1825. It was in the April number of that year, for example, that he gave to the world his bewitching little sketch of "Barbara S——." Confronting page 500 of this Popular Centenary Edition, will be found the facsimile of a note in the Essayist's handwriting, in which he states distinctly in so many words, "Barbara S—— shadows under that name Miss Kelly's early life," adding, "and I had the anecdote beautifully from her." As it happens—to my very great pleasure be it said—I can repeat in Charles Lamb's own words a sentence of his occurring in this very essay. "I have had the honour (I must ever call it) once to have been admitted to the tea-table of Miss Kelly." It can scarcely be matter of surprise, therefore, that while engaged upon this very labour of love for me, the editing of the writings of the Master Essayist, I should have challenged Miss Kelly to throw some light upon her old friend's bewildering announcement. In answer to that challenge Miss Kelly, with a distinctness and precision of memory befitting eighteen rather than eighty-five, has now given, through the following communication, penned fifty years after the famous Elian Essay was first printed, her own charming version of the incident:—

### The True Story of Barbara S——.

Bayswater, *September* 28, 1875.

My Dear Sir,

I perfectly remember relating an incident of my childhood to Charles Lamb and his dear sister, and I have not the least doubt that the intense interest he seemed to take in the recital, induced him to adopt it as the principal feature in his beautiful story of "Barbara S——." Much, however, as I venerate the wonderful powers of Charles Lamb as a writer—grateful as I ever must feel to have enjoyed for so many years the friendship of himself and his dear sister, and proudly honoured as I am by the two exquisite sonnets he has given to the world as tributary to my humble talent, I have never been able thoroughly to appreciate the extraordinary skill with which he has, in the construction of his story, desired and contrived so to mystify and characterize the events, as to keep me out of sight, and render it utterly impossible for any one to guess at me as the original heroine. Such, I know, was his intention, otherwise, so to have avoided and altered the facts in every point as he has done, would have surprised and disheartened me. As it is, I persuade myself, that I only second his delicate motives, when I object to appear in the garb in which he has so skilfully presented the young lady. So that if I am to be, as it seems,

considered and announced as the *bonâ fide* heroine of the tale, I frankly declare, that I infinitely prefer the position and feelings of "little Fanny Kelly" to those of Miss Barbara. The question is, how truly, and to what extent, it even "shadows" the early life of Frances Maria Kelly? I was not a little playhouse "Super," snatched from respectable poverty, to be plunged (alas! as such too often are) without instruction, or protection, into a life of risk to health and morals. I was a well-born, cared for child, of a devoted mother, whose position and education as a gentlewoman, taught her that self-esteem which, with mental courage, patient endurance, and unceasing sacrifices, enabled her with her five children to "take arms against a siege of troubles."

In the year 1799, Miss Jackson, one of my mother's daughters, by her first husband, was placed under the special care of dear old Tate Wilkinson, proprietor of the York Theatre, there to practice, as in due progression, what she had learned of Dramatic Art, while a Chorus Singer at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, coming back, as she did after a few years, as the wife of the late celebrated, inimitable Charles Mathews, to the Haymarket Theatre. In 1799, through the influence of my uncle, Michael Kelly, the celebrated singer and composer of that day, I was allowed to become a miniature chorister in her place; causing, I assure you, considerable animadversion among the supernumerary class, as to the shameful impropriety of giving "that little thing" one pound a week, as regular salary. Be it known, however, that though only nine years of age, I could read and sing at sight, any piece of music put into my hands; and when through John Kemble (as I have already told in public, and am even now recording in my reminiscences) I had the Duke of York, in *Richard III.* given me to study, I came on the following day to rehearsal quite perfect in the words, and when told by what action to express the *sneer* at Gloucester's deformity, I said (as poor Barbara could not have said), "Thank you, ma'am, my mother told me how that should be done." Whilst I write, I feel myself something too intrusive, but Miss Barbara must give me my rights, and stand content upon her own merits.

About this time, my father had been four years from home, which he left self-banished, to avoid the then consequences of incurring debts he could not pay, and which he never would have incurred but in absurd imitation of the princely life his brother Michael was led into with almost equal rashness. And I must needs hint, that as under Michael Kelly's very peculiar domestic circumstances, an influence existed to which my mother could not make her pride succumb, the "brother and uncle" fell very short of his supposed responsibility, and our struggle was indeed a very sad one.

I am now coming briefly to the "Drury Lane Treasury," on which (with now and then a half-guinea, ill spared—under the wax seal of a letter from York), was our only dependance. Any one may know the state of England at that time. All our men gone to the war. Dancers learning to make their own shoes. Bread—a shilling and a penny per quartern. Sugar—one shilling per pound. Salt—sixpence. Tea (fit to drink)—ten shillings. Green ditto—twelve shillings. &c. &c.

One Saturday, during the limited season of nine months in the year, Mr. Peake (dear, good old gentleman!) looking, as I remember he always did—anxiously perplexed—doubtless as to how he could best dole out the too frequently insufficient amount provided for the ill-paid company, silently looked me in the face, while he carefully folded a very *dirty, ragged* bank note—put it into my hand, patted my cheek, and with a slight pressure on my shoulder, hinting there was no time for our usual gossip—as good as said "go, my dear," and I hurried down the long gallery, lined down each side with performers of all degrees, more than one of whom whispered as I passed—"Is it full pay, dear?" I nodded "Yes," and proceeded to my seat on the window of the landing-place.

It was a great comfort in those days, to have a bank-note to look at; but not always easy to open one. Mine had been cut and repaired with a line of gum paper, about twenty times as thick as the note itself, threatening the total destruction of the thin part.

. Now observe in what small matters Fanny and Barbara, were in a marked degree different characters. Barbara, at 11 years of age, was some time before she felt the different size of a guinea to a half guinea, *held tight in her hand.* I, at 9 years old, was not so untaught, or innocent. I was a woman of the world. I took *nothing* for granted. I had a deep respect for Mr. Peake, but the join might have disfigured the note—destroyed its currency; and it was my business to see all safe. So, I carefully opened it. A two pound-note instead of one! The blood rushed into my face, the tears into my eyes, and for a moment, something like an ecstacy of joy passed through my mind. "Oh! what a blessing to my dear mother!"—"To whom?"—in an instant said my violently beating heart,—"My mother?" Why she would spurn me for the wish. How shall I ever own to her my guilty thought? I trembled violently—I staggered back on my way to the Treasury, but no one would let me pass, until I said, "But Mr. Peake has given me too much." "Too much, has he?" said one, and was followed by a coarse, cold, derisive, general laugh. Oh! how it went to my heart; but on I went.

"If you please, Mr. Peake, you have given me a two——.

"A what?"

"A two, Sir!"

"A two!—God bless my soul!—tut-tut-tut-tut—dear, dear, dear!—God bless my soul! There, dear," and without another word, he, in exchange, laid a one pound note on the desk; a new one, quite clean,—a bright, honest looking note,—mine, the one I had a right to,—my own,—within the limit of my poor deservings.

Thus, my dear sir, I give (as you say you wish to have the *facts* as accurately stated as possible) the simple, absolute truth, and when I have the pleasure to see you, I will point out, in each particular, the extraordinary mystification with which it has been sought to ignore, as it were, my existence, with any reference to "Barbara S——." At all events, I trust, my dear Sir, that you will believe me to be,

Yours, very sincerely and faithfully,
FRANCES MARIA KELLY.

Charles Kent, Esq.

P.S.—You see how I *shake hands.* This "very important document" may, I think, be considered much in the same light as the MS. poems lately left in a cab by a gentleman, who advertised for them as—"Of no value to any one but the owner."

Barbara S——, it will be seen, therefore, was but another illustration of Charles Lamb's delight in sending a truth masquerading. Nothing he enjoyed more than tricking one out almost beyond the reach of recognition. He prided himself on being—in contradistinction to a matter-of-fact man—what he called "a matter of lie man." He had a roguish satisfaction in imposing upon his reader's good faith, by means of circumstantial details born entirely of his own imagination, and these he would set forth in his narratives with the gravest particularity, as though they were historical and incontrovertible. Some of his literary hoaxes in this way were masterpieces of ingenuity. His mock life of Liston, the comedian, for example, ran for a while the round of the newspapers, to his intense amusement, as a perfectly authentic record, genealogical and otherwise. He played with truths as dexterously, for the

mere fun of the thing, in an essay, in a parenthesis even, nay, as in this instance, in the merest footnote, as a juggler with gilt balls on his little strip of carpet. Occasionally at these moments, even in the midst of his gravest disclaimers, you may catch a glint of the twinkling eyes and dimpling mouth of the humorist. But as a rule, when really bent upon taking you in, as in Barbara S——, his gravity is imperturbable. "Insoluble compounds of jest and earnest," they have been well called, these wonderful, these simply inimitable Essays of Elia. Enthroned there, he had no need according to his varying theme,

——to choose Cervantes' serious air,
Or shake and laugh in Rabelais' easy chair.

But, in an easier chair of his own, he discoursed exactly, as the humour of the moment prompted him, upon whatever came uppermost; and this too in his own natural voice, in words that by no possibility could have fallen from any other lips. To no author who ever breathed is Buffon's immortal axiom "Le style c'est l'homme!" more directly applicable. His style is indeed himself. Not a shadowing forth of something within him, but his very innermost self, his eidolon, his distinctive individuality. It is recognizable at once, this Elian air, as a something *sui generis*, a thing unique, a *lusus literarum*. And the mere manner of it, what a charm it has! The very diction, what a flavour, what an aroma there is about it! It is antiquity talking to us afresh, re-born, rejuvenescent: and yet for all that, still to the very last, ingrained, ineradicable antiquity! Not "bald antiquity" either, but, as one might say, flowing, hirsute—with a bloom upon it, though still venerable. Employed by any other writer than Charles Lamb, the archaic words, the obsolete phrases, the fantastic turns of expression, the discarded or forgotten idioms, must almost by necessity have degenerated into a mass of affectation. But as they are here employed by Elia, there is about them not a particle of affectation. As a writer, he may be said to have been "to the manner born." Could he by any rare chance have dropped this distinctive style—in which he spoke and wrote and thought habitually—then, but not otherwise, there would have been hazard of his degenerating into affectation. And this because the manner thus peculiar to him was not assumed, so to speak, as a raiment with which he clothed his ideas. It was no mere husk, or shell, or superficies—it was, as already said, ingrained; it was as the very substance of him; it was part and parcel of himself, a something inherent, integral, ineradicable. It is no more reasonably to be taken exception to in his instance than it would be reasonable to charge any one with responsibility, because of the natural colour of his hair, the contour of his features, or the shade of his complexion. In order to recognize how literally true all this is, as to there being no tendency even to affectation in Charles Lamb's mode of putting his thoughts into written language, it is only necessary to examine anything jotted down by him at his most careless moments, the merest scrap of a note dashed off, upon the spur of the moment, in helter-skelter scribbling to a friend. Turning to his delightful Correspondence, that is to say, examining not the Essays but his familiar letters to his intimates, Charles Lamb, it will be seen, is Charles Lamb throughout, he is still to the last consistently Elia.

As an Essayist, he not merely takes his place by right with the best of them, but in the very first place, in the front rank, with Montaigne and Sir Thomas Browne, with Sir Richard Steele, and with Joseph Addison. And what choice papers there are among these half hundred Elian masterpieces! The cloisteral solitudes of "the South-Sea House," which we traverse on crossing the very threshold, how he re-peoples them with life-like glimpses of his brother-clerks!—Evans chirping and expanding over his muffin—Plumer rattling, rattle-headed, and obstreperous—Harry Man terse, fresh, epigrammatic—John Tipp,

the accountant, so formal in his life that his actions seem ruled with a ruler—Thomas Tame, condescending in the aristocratic bend of his figure, by reason of his constant remembrance of his high lineage, a remembrance sweetening and ennobling his poverty, in spite of his being endowed with an intellect of the shallowest order, his mind being, as Lamb puts it in his bookish way, "in its original state of white paper!"

The diversity of themes descanted upon by Elia is in itself marvellous. Cheek by jowl with that "band of shining ones," for example, the Quakers and Quakeresses, whose very raiment as he describes it, seems incapable of receiving a soil, "cleanliness with them being something more than the absence of its contrary," he delineates just as lovingly, the Chimney Sweepers; not grown sweepers, that is, but those tender novices blooming through their first nigritude, whose early cry he likens to the peep peep of the young sparrow, "youthful Africans of our own growth, almost clergy imps, dim specs, innocent blacknesses." He expatiates, again, as none but your well-habituated playgoer could do upon the merits of certain rare Old Actors. He renders what nearly amounts to the absence of a sense almost delightful, *vide* his Chapter on Ears. He has his tender Reverie of Dream Children, his serio-comic Complaint as to the Decay of Beggars, his sprightly vindication of the sweet folly of Valentines, his fraternization with the drolls of history and fiction *à propos* to All Fools' Day. The rosy gilled Borrower, as a member of what he gravely terms the great or sovereign race, finds in him at least an appreciator and a celebrant. His delicately outlined sketches start from the page, living and breathing. Mrs. Battle, "Old Sarah Battle, (now with God) who next to her devotions loved a game of whist," thanks to him, has her wish immortally realized—basking for ever in front of a clean-swept hearth, a clear fire crackling behind the bars, the curtains close drawn, the rigour of the game predominant! Nothing he touches, as Johnson said of Goldsmith, in the famous epitaph, but he adorns. His Grace before Meat, not only blesses the repast, but gives one an appetite. If he discourses of a viand, his very words are savorous, his very style is succulent. Reading his "Dissertation upon Roast Pig," we emulate Hoti the Chinese swineherd, and Bobo his lubberly boy, we too seem to have burnt our fingers with the crackling, we too have our mouths set a-watering. If he celebrates the acting of Munden, he not only enables you to realize that matchless player's inexhaustible battery of looks, his unaccountable warfare with your gravity, his unexpected sprouting out of new sets of features like Hydra, his being not so much one as legion, not so much a comedian as a company, but leaves you at last marvelling over Munden's capacity to invest with preternatural interest the most matter of fact objects of every day life, a joint stool gazed at by him being lifted into constellatory importance, a tub of butter contemplated by his eyes amounting to a Platonic idea, he himself at last standing wonder-stricken amidst the commonplace materials of existence, like primeval man with the sun and stars about him!

In 1823, the very year within which the Elian Essays were first collectively published, the Lambs left their home over the brazier's shop in Covent Garden. Thereupon they took up their abode, for three years together, close to the New River, in a detached whitish house, called Colebrook Cottage, in a Row of that name at Islington.

And memorably for him it was during their residence in that surburban retreat, that Charles Lamb, on Tuesday, the 29th March, 1825, closed his thirty-three years clerkship at the India House. As his retiring pension he had awarded to him about two-thirds of his income, namely, £450 per annum: provision being made by the Directors for Mary Lamb, in the contingency of her surviving him, upon a scale as ample as if she had been his wife rather than his sister; she having indeed been to him, as the *Westminster Review*

truly said, more than his wife, and he to her more than a husband. The Essayist's sensations at the time of his retirement, he graphically portrayed in his Elian paper of the "Superannuated Man."

A little more than nine years of repose lay still before him, repose strenuously earned, but alas, only indifferently enjoyed.

From Islington the Lambs moved, in 1826, to Enfield, taking up their abode there at a distance of a dozen miles from London, in Mr. Westwood's Cottage, at Chase-side. There they remained until 1829, when they removed next door, into the house of a Mrs. Leishman.

For a while in that year of transition from one house to another, in that sequestered corner of Enfield, they went back for a few months to their constant resting place or *pied à terre,* whenever they came up to town upon a flying visit, meaning Miss Buffam's, at 34, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane. As the event proved, Mrs. Leishman's, at Chase-side, was the last home but one of Charles Lamb and his sister. There they lived for four years together, from 1829 to 1833, shut out almost entirely because of their remoteness from London, from what, by reason of his gregarious nature, was so essential as a source of happiness to Lamb, constant intercourse with his more cherished friends and acquaintance. The deprivation to him must at the outset have been excessive, and at intervals, doubtless, became hardly endurable. Town life was the breath of his nostrils. His love for books, no doubt, was intense. But he loved, still more, chat and companionship. Beyond this, he was a thorough Londoner. He could have said word for word with Dr. Johnson, "When you have seen one green field, you have seen all green fields. Sir, I like to look upon mankind; let us take a walk down Fleet Street." In this spirit he wrote sententiously to Southey, "I am a Christian, Englishman, Londoner, Templar." Early in life, his view of Christianity was as little orthodox as that of his bosom friend Coleridge. They were resolute Socinians. More than that, as believers in necessity, they were intense admirers of Dr. Priestley, writing of whom Lamb said in 1796, "I love and honour him almost profanely:" speaking of him in 1797, again, as one "whom I sin in almost adoring." About that period, indeed, Lamb for some time attended the Unitarian Chapel at Hackney. His Socinianism died out in the end, however, utterly. Hazlitt (himself an Unitarian, and the son of an Unitarian minister) describes Charles Lamb, upon one occasion, reverently referring to Our Saviour as "He who once put on a semblance of mortality," and exclaiming, at another moment, in a sudden effusion of love and awe, "If He were to come into this room we should fall down and kiss the hem of His garment!"

During the period of Lamb's secluded life at Enfield, he brought out, in 1830, his ALBUM VERSES, and a year afterwards, in 1831, his rhymed *jeu d'ésprit,* entitled, SATAN IN SEARCH OF A WIFE. It was after his removal in 1833 to Mrs. Walden's in Church Street, Edmonton, that he collected together from the periodicals, THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA. There, in that poor little melancholy tenement, known as Bay Cottage—towards the lowly porch of which you descend from the high-road through a lugubrious garden along a trail of sunken flagstones—the sweet, wise, blithe, delightful humorist found the home in which he breathed his last on Saturday, the 27th December, 1834. The final six months of his life were saddened almost beyond endurance by the death of his dearest friend, the one whom for fifty years without intermission he had loved and revered. During this darkened interval of half a year, he was occasionally heard exclaiming to himself in a tone of anguish and with an air of bewildered abstraction, "Coleridge is dead! Coleridge is dead!" Just five weeks before he himself expired, he wrote in a few sentences expressive of the tenderest appreciation, his "Last Words on Coleridge." The cause of his own demise was a trivial accident. Walking one afternoon on the London Road near the Bell at Edmonton, his foot slipped on a pebble, the

sprain and bruise caused by his fall bringing on, a day or two afterwards, an attack of erysipelas. Upon Saturday, the 3rd January, 1835, exactly a week after his death, he was laid in his grave in the picturesque little churchyard at Edmonton, and as John Forster, who stood by it while it closed over him, said with loving emphasis within less than a month afterwards, "never closed it over a better or a wiser spirit." Upwards of twelve years elapsed before Mary Lamb—who died on the 20th May, 1847—was laid in the same grave by the side of that incomparable brother, who, for thirty-four years had been her faithful and devoted protector. Not until then was the secret of their tragical history publicly disclosed. So long as the unhappy sister survived, it was veiled from general observation. Even Charles Lamb's adopted daughter Emma Isola, afterwards the wife, now the widow, of Edward Moxon, was entirely ignorant of the "strange calamity" during the whole period of her residence under the Essayist's roof-beams. Insomuch that, when she was seated with the Lambs one night at the supper-table, the conversation at the moment having turned upon their father, on her innocently enquiring how it happened she never heard mention of their mother, though Mary gave a sharp piercing cry for which Charles playfully and laughingly rebuked her, not a word then or afterwards was uttered by either of them in explanation. It was in the *British Quarterly* for May, 1848—Mary Lamb being then a whole year dead—that the terrible truth was first revealed.

Immediately after Charles Lamb himself had passed away, the most genial and tenderly reticent tributes were offered to his memory. (1) Barry Cornwall, whose name was on the humorist's lips upon his deathbed, contributed his Recollections, signed B.W. P., to the *Athenæum* of the 24th January, and of the 7th February, 1835. (2) John Forster wrote his commemorative paper in the May number that year of the *New Monthly*. (3) Barron Field produced his short Memoir in the *Annual Biography and Obituary* of 1836. (4) Edward Moxon did the like in Leigh Hunt's *London Journal*, and (5) P. G. Patmore in the *Court Magazine*. (6) Talfourd, as Lamb's literary executor, in the June of 1837 (Mary being still alive) gave no clue whatever as to the truth through that slight thread of narrative which constituted his First Sketch of the Life of Lamb, and upon which were strung together the contents of his two carefully edited volumes of the Essayist's Letters. (7) Twelve years afterwards, in the July of 1848—silence having just before been broken in the *British Quarterly*—Talfourd at last spoke out plainly in his "Final Memorials." (8) Percy Fitzgerald in 1866, published his entertaining little anecdotal volume entitled, "Charles Lamb, his Friends, his Haunts, and his Books." (9) Later on in that same twelvemonth, Barry Cornwall, in his seventy-seventh year, issued from the press his admirable Memoir of the Humorist. (10) Thomas Craddock, in the December of 1867, completed in his turn another version of the same biography. (11) G. A. Sala in 1868 prefixed to the first of the four volumes of an entirely new edition of the works of Lamb, an essay on his life and genius, which was subsequently withdrawn from publication. (12) Thomas Purnell a few months afterwards replaced that cancelled essay with another, in which were incorporated Mrs. Moxon's personal recollections of the Essayist. (13) Carew Hazlitt, himself for a while one of the numerous editors of the four-volumed edition just mentioned, gave to the public in 1874, as an integral part of his miscellaneous book about Charles and Mary Lamb, his New Illustrations of the former's Life and Character.

Sidelights have been thrown upon the Essayist's history, moreover, from a number of other scattered directions. (14) Mary Novello (Mrs. Cowden Clarke), gave her reminiscences of the Lambs in two papers contributed to the *National Magazine*. (15) Edmund Ollier jotted down his, by way of introduction to a cheap reprint of the Essays. (16) Mr. Upcott, in 1838, sketched Lamb's memoir in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. (17) Lord Lytton, in the January of 1867,

devoted an article in the *Quarterly* to the Humorist and his Companions. (18) Alexander Ireland gave a tolerably accurate chronological list of Charles Lamb's writings. (19) J. E. Babson, of Chelsea, U.S., a diligent student of Lamb, collected together from the periodicals under the title of "Eliana" some thirty essays and sketches, most of which had been previously overlooked.

The most recent of all the commentators upon Lamb, Mr. Carew Hazlitt, in his miscellaneous volume, published in 1874, has taken occasion not only to denounce with some show of reason the occasional literary falsifications of Talfourd, both in the Sketch of the Life and in the Final Memorials; but, in a wholly uncalled-for manner and with the most unjustifiable acrimony, to denounce also what he does not shrink from designating Mr. Procter's moral falsifications: meaning, as he goes on to explain immediately, a wilful distortion of biographical facts. Forty years after the grave had closed over Lamb, Mr. Hazlitt insisted, in fact, to put his statement quite plainly, first, that Elia was a drunkard, and secondly, that in the latter portion of his life he was deranged. The first assertion, to express it mildly, is a monstrous exaggeration. The second is proved by a mass of incontrovertible evidence to be utterly untrue. Charles Lamb's frame was feeble, and, as Talfourd said in 1837, a small portion of wine affected it. He was constitutionally afflicted besides with an impediment in his speech, and it can therefore be small matter for wonder when we find Procter writing that a trivial quantity of strong liquid yet further disturbed it. Lamb himself playfully boasted that he kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. His readiness to indulge in the luxury of excessive self-depreciation was shown indeed repeatedly, as when he wrote to Bernard Barton, "I am accounted by some people a good man! How cheap that character is acquired! Pay your debts; don't borrow money, nor twist your kitten's neck off, nor disturb the congregation, &c., and the business is done. I know things (for thoughts *are* things) of myself which would make every friend I have fly me as a plague patient. I once set a dog upon a crab's leg that was shoved out under a mass of seaweeds—a pretty little feeler! Oh, pah, how sick I am of that. And a lie, a mean one, I once told. I stink in the midst of respect." His surviving friends aver in his regard to this day, as his other friends, now dead and gone, wrote of him years ago, quite distinctly and absolutely, that he was *not* given to intemperance. As for his sanity, down to the very last his dead and living intimates were and are equally positive. Those who have recently asserted otherwise either knew him personally not at all, or were mere chance acquaintances. Besides which, in their very manner of declaring him to have been at the last demented, they have contrived to throw the most serious doubts upon their own general accuracy. Mr. Carew Hazlitt, for example, who is so very positive as to the humorist having been deranged towards the close of his career, speaks of him (p. 139) as an inmate of Hoxton Asylum in the winter of 1796–97, meaning 1795–96, being thus distinctly out in his reckoning by a whole twelvemonth. Mr. S. C. Hall, again, who is so very decidedly of opinion that Lamb was "maddish" towards the end of his existence, talks of him in the same breath as having been under the care of one Mrs. Redford, a woman accustomed to take charge of insane persons, at Bay Cottage, Enfield—Bay Cottage being, in point of fact, the tenement in which Charles Lamb died, in the full possession of his faculties, not at Enfield, but four miles away from Enfield, in Church Street, Edmonton. The Essayist's sanity, however, down to the very last, is capable of being very clearly demonstrated. Documentary evidence, in fact, is adducable that his mind preserved its serenity, even during those last four months which were so inexpressibly saddened for him by the afflicting circumstance of the death of Coleridge. That his intellect preserved its equipoise under that severe shock is visible in every line of his beautiful letter to the Rev.

James Gillman, of Highgate, on Lamb's first hearing of their common bereavement; a letter written on the 5th August, 1834, from Mr. Walden's, at Edmonton. It is legible again that complete sanity of Elia (which only within these last few years has been so cruelly questioned) in the perfectly coherent and graceful verses, *vide infra*, p. 93, penned by him on the 8th of the following October, and addressed to Margaret W—— (so daintily comparing her to her pretty namesake of the greensward, that other, lowlier Marguerite), lines written, as will be seen, only eleven weeks before his death, and published, less than three months after his interment, in the columns of the *Athenæum*. Nay, as if to put the fact of his unquestionable sanity down to the very latest, beyond the reach of contradiction, there is the charming pleasantry running all through Elia's playful epistle to Mr. Childs, of Bungay, a letter penned by the humorist only a day or two before he met with his slight but fatal accident. That accident came to him out of his exceeding love for pedestrianism. Fourteen miles a day he would easily accomplish, gliding over the ground with (as Talfourd described it) "a shadowy step," on limbs so slender that Thomas Hood spoke of them as his "immaterial legs." His walking excursions at one time were rendered almost ludicrously erratic and exhaustive, by reason of the vagaries of his then constant attendant, Dash, a huge and handsome dog, the gift of Hood, but a gift that Mary Lamb eventually entreated Patmore to accept, "if only out of charity," for otherwise, as she wrote serio-comically, "he'll be the death of Charles." Incidentally, in one of the humorist's letters to Patmore, while enquiring after his old favourite Dash (then no longer his, but his correspondent's) Charles Lamb might almost be said to have prophetically poked his fun at those who were years afterwards posthumously to throw doubts upon his own sanity! "Are his [Dash's] intellects sound?" he asks. "Does he wander a little in *his* conversation?" The italics are Lamb's. "You cannot be too careful to watch the first symptoms of incoherence. The first illogical snarl he makes, to St. Luke's with him. All the dogs here are going mad, if you believe the overseers; but I protest they seem to me very rational and collected. But nothing is so deceitful as mad people to those who are not used to them. Try him with hot water: if he won't lick it up, it is a sign—he does not like it. Does his tail wag horizontally or perpendicularly? That has decided the fate of many dogs in Enfield. Has he bit any of the children yet? If he has, have them shot, and keep *him* for curiosity, to see if it was the hydrophobia." Excellent fooling, this; and in his instance—reading it, now, forty years afterwards—fooling that has about it so pathetic an application!

The abounding frolic fun of his letters equals, at moments almost surpasses, the otherwise matchless humour of Elia. Hear him in one of these delightful epistles run a droll idea nearly to death with a Shaksperian *abandonne*, "I am flatter," he writes to Bernard Barton, "I am flatter than a denial or a pancake; emptier than Judge ——'s wig when the head is in it; a cypher—an O. My wick hath a thief in it, and I can't muster courage to snuff it. My day is gone into twilight, and I don't think it worth the expense of candles. I have not volition enough left to dot my i's, much less to comb my eyebrows. My hand writes, not I, just as chickens run about a little when their heads are off. O for a vigorous fit of gout, of cholic, of toothache!—an earwig in my auditory, a fly in my visual organ; pain is life—the sharper the more evidence of life. I sleep in a damp bedroom, but it does me no good; I come home late o' nights, but do not find any visible amendment." A misfortune—at these moments of supreme internal enjoyment arising out of his exquisite sense of the ridiculous—he records with a sort of relish. Writing of *Mr. H.*'s damnation, he says almost with a smack of the lips, "Hang 'em! how they hissed. It was not a hiss neither; it was a sort of frantic yell, like a congrega-

tion of mad geese, with roarings something like bears, mows and mops like apes, sometimes snakes that hissed me into madness. 'Twas like St. Anthony's temptations." Everybody knows Sydney Smith's commiserative allusions (when talking with the missionary bound for New Zealand) to the cold clergyman on the sideboard, and the dry little boy in the toast-rack, his remarks ending with a hope that if his friend *were* eaten by the cannibals, he might at the least disagree with them! Yet in all this Sydney had been unwittingly anticipated. For Charles Lamb, in a precisely similar strain, had already written dissuasively to Manning, then bound for China, "Some say they are cannibals, and then conceive a Tartar fellow eating my friend, and adding the cold malignity of mustard and vinegar! 'Tis terrible to be weighed out at fivepence the pound." Never wrote wit or humorist more exhilarating nonsense when interchanging merry greetings with a kindred spirit. Instance the close of his sportive letter challenging Hood to rival junkettings—"O the curds-and-cream you shall eat with us here! O the turtle-soup and lobster-salads we shall devour with you there! O the old books we shall peruse here! O the new nonsense we shall trifle over there! O Sir T. Browne here! O Mr. Hood and Mr. Jerdan there! Thine C. (Urbanus), L. (Sylvanus)—(Elia Ambo)." Among all his letters, however, as delectable, as simply inimitable as any that could be named is one dated 19th July, 1827, and addressed to P. G. Patmore, then in Paris, beginning:—"Dear P.—I am so poorly! I have been to a funeral where I made a pun to the consternation of the rest of the mourners." All through it "Oh, I am so poorly!" runs like a *réfrain*. "Mary is gone out for some soles," he writes, adding immediately, "I suppose it's no use to ask you to come and partake of 'em; else there's a steam vessel." The letter jerks from one theme to another. "We hope," he observes one while, "the French wines do not disagree with Mrs. Patmore. By the way, I like her." Another while, "Christ, how sick I am!—not of the world, but of the widow's shrub. She's sworn under 6000*l.*, but I think she perjured herself. She howls in E *la*, and I comfort her in B flat. You understand music?" And so on from one freakish extravagance of thought and phrase to another. "'No shrimps!' (That is in answer to Mary's question about how the soles are to be done.)" Another while, "We had a merry passage with the widow at the Commons. She was howling—part howling and part giving directions to the proctor—when, crash! down went my sister through a crazy chair, and made the clerks grin, and I grinned, and the widow tittered—and then I knew that she was not inconsolable." And thereupon he trails off—with an eye to the astonishing of his correspondent—a conglomeration of grave-faced imaginary news about their intimates. "Procter has got a wen growing out at the nape of his neck, which his wife wants him to have cut off; but I think it a rather agreeable excrescence—like his poetry—redundant. Hone has hanged himself for debt. Godwin was taken up for picking pockets. Becky takes to bad courses. Her father was blown up in a steam machine. The coroner found it Insanity. I should not like him to sit on my letter." His familiar correspondence, like his familiar conversation, was mostly remarkable for its startling surprises, for those abrupt incongruities of idea or of expression, which were wit-flashes as sudden as rifle shots from an ambuscade. His oddest thoughts at these times must evidently out, whatever the consequence. Asked by an old lady, for example, how he liked babies? Quoth he instantly, to her consternation, "B-boiled, ma'am!" Listening to the extravagant praises lavished upon some one by a good-natured matron who was holding forth at great length about her paragon to Elia's secret disgust, the humorist, on hearing her wind up her eulogium at last with "I know him, bless him!" blurted out to the wonderment of all present, "Well, I don't; but d-d-damn him at a hazard!" Those were still swearing times, it ought for Lamb's credit's sake to be remembered. Indeed, when Acres observed, in "The Rivals," "damns have had their day," he was certainly made by Sheridan to

speak by anticipation; that expletive—always, for some odd reason a strange favourite with Lamb—long surviving the Regency. It is altogether a mistake, however, seriously to charge Elia, as some have done, with profanity. His words, under the incentive of his wit, were occasionally extravagant; but his heart, in its innermost recesses, was essentially reverent. If out of the very depth of his scorn for the Frenchman who was one day in his hearing profanely contrasting "Voltaire's" character with that of Our Lord, Charles Lamb shrank not from stammering out his assent that "Voltaire was a very good Jesus Christ—for the F-French!" he could upon fitting occasion rebuke any one who talked slightingly about religion, as where, turning to a young man who had been speaking flippantly of holy things in the presence of Irving and Coleridge, he asked with poignant irony, as the party broke up, "Pray, did you come here in a hat, sir, or a t-turban?"

Turning to a consideration of Lamb himself, however, after a cursory glance thus at his sayings and writings, it is easy enough to realize the aspect of the man from the portraits and descriptions which have happily come down to us from the last generation. Surmounting a curiously fragile-looking frame —which was clothed completely and almost clerically in black, including black small-clothes and black silk stockings, overlapped when out of doors with black cloth gaiters—was a head pronounced by Leigh Hunt "worthy of Aristotle," and spoken of by Hazlitt as "a fine Titian head, full of dumb eloquence." The eyes were softly brown, yet glittering. The face was oval in its lower portion. The forehead was expanded. The nose was slightly curved and delicately carved at the nostrils. N. P. Willis, in his "Pencillings," alludes with especial emphasis to the Essayist's "beautiful deep-set eyes, aquiline nose, and very indescribable mouth." His enchanting smile, by the way, is the first characteristic named in the epitaph inscribed upon his tombstone. It is, besides this, the crowning peculiarity mentioned by Talfourd in the latter's wistful ejaculation, "Alas! how many even of his own most delicate fancies, rich as they are in feeling and in wisdom, will be lost to those who have not present to them the sweet broken accents and the half-playful, half-melancholy smile of the writer." Several portraits of Charles Lamb are preserved, of more or less excellence. Robert Handcock's chalk drawing pencilled about the year 1797, depicts him in profile, as he was with the comely bloom upon him of one or two-and-twenty. A grotesque caricature of him, scratched upon copper in 1825 by "his friend Brook Pulham"—as Sir Fretful Plagiary would have called him, one of his d——d good-natured friends—must have been ludicrously like, exaggerating his aquiline nose into a hooked conch, and dwindling his slim figure to the uttermost extremity of attenuation. Another etching, published in *Fraser's Magazine*, represents him among his darling books, a candle before him, a tumbler of grog at his elbow—a home sketch, unlike the last (which, as has been said, was merely grotesque), being, in a word, simply delightful. As, indeed, should be any truthful limning of one of whom Forster declared (within a few weeks after Lamb's interment) that he was "the most entirely delightful person" he had then (in 1835) ever known. Long afterwards, in his "Life of Landor," the same keen and generous observer spoke of Elia with precisely the same enthusiasm, as "that most lovable of men, who had not an infirmity that his sweetness of nature did not make one think must be akin to a virtue." Hazlitt, pencil in hand, depicted Lamb with a noble, beautiful head, frilled round the neck, almost as though in masquerade. As familiar to the public at large as any *vera effigies* of the humorist that could be named is T. Wageman's full-front portraiture—wrinkled, bright-eyed, curly-headed—a likeness prefixed to Moxon's 1840 edition of the works, in double-columned imperial octavo. F. S. Cary's portrait is hardly so satisfactory, or, in other words, so readily recognizable. In many respects, the one approaching about the nearest to a resemblance—to what Hamlet terms so felicitously a counterfeit present-

ment—was that painted somewhere about the early part of 1827 by Henry Meyer, from sittings given to him in the artist's then studio at 3, Red Lion Square, near Holborn. The original picture, which was of life-size, was afterwards copied by Henry Meyer in a sort of miniature kit-kat replica, now in the possession of Sir Charles Dilke, into whose hands it has come by inheritance from his grandfather. It is from this charming picture, in the background of which may be recognized the portico of the old East India House in Leadenhall Street, now no longer in existence, that the engraving has been made that forms the frontispiece to this Popular Centenary Edition. For the loan of the painting for this purpose I have to make my heartiest acknowledgments to Sir Charles Dilke, who also most generously placed at my command (to do whatever I liked with for the purposes of this Edition) all the choice manuscripts and proofs of Lamb which have in the same manner passed into his possession. From these rare fragments of the Essayist's correspondence, it will be seen that I have availed myself of the privilege of having more than one delightful passage carefully fac-similed. Through what I cannot but regard as a happy accident, the skilled master of the burin to whose hands Meyer's portrait of Charles Lamb was entrusted, for the purpose of having it engraved here as the frontispiece, recognized the picture upon the instant as one he perfectly remembers seeing painted eight-and-thirty years ago, when he himself, as a stripling, was beginning his career as one of Henry Meyer's pupils. While he plied his graver upon this steel plate, he could recall to mind perfectly well, so he assures me, the sittings given to his old master by the Essayist while the picture was being painted. In that vivid remembrance, it may be seen from the engraving itself, that Mr. Joseph Brown handled the burin as Izaak Walton recommended his brother anglers to handle the bait, as if he loved it. There, in the frontispiece, is visible at a glance the blithe, benignant face of the Master Humorist. Here, in the carefully ordered mass of his varied writings, the rare, wise, brilliant, and, in many ways, incomparable genius of the author is yet more vividly recognizable. In Elia especially Charles Lamb's voice is audible. Though dead, he *there* speaketh! He whom Procter justly pronounced "one of the rarest and most delicate of the humorists of England!" Of whom Leigh Hunt said so well that "he was of the genuine line of Yorick!" And whose mastery of the subtle science of criticism was such that Algernon Swinburne, surely no mean authority upon either head, has, in his "Essay on William Blake," declared Lamb emphatically to be "the most supremely competent judge and exquisite critic of lyrical and dramatic art that we have ever had!" Lamb's judgment, nevertheless, needless to add, was not infallible. While he doated upon Beaumont and Fletcher, Byron and Shelley had for him, strange to say, no attraction whatever. While he delighted in the novels of Smollett and Fielding and Richardson, he cared not one snap of the fingers for Walter Scott's Waverley romances. The books he took most to he dubbed lovingly his midnight darlings. His own works, to those who revel in his humour, come distinctly under that category. As an essayist, he is not simply admired—he is beloved and idolized.

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# Dedication

TO

## SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

[The following dedicatory epistle was prefixed to the first collected edition of Charles Lamb's Works, published in two volumes octavo by Charles and J. Ollier, in 1818—not a word of Elia being then written. The asterisks refer to the sign of "The Salutation and Cat," at No. 17, Newgate Street, an old-fashioned tavern, in the wainscoted parlour of which Coleridge and Lamb used often to meet of nights during the former's occasional visits to London while he was yet a student at Cambridge.]

MY DEAR COLERIDGE,—

YOU will smile to see the slender labours of your friend designated by the title of *Works:* but such was the wish of the gentlemen who have kindly undertaken the trouble of collecting them, and from their judgment could be no appeal.

It would be a kind of disloyalty to offer to any one but yourself a volume containing the *early pieces*, which were first published among your poems, and were fairly derivatives from you and them. My friend Lloyd and myself came into our first battle (authorship is a sort of warfare) under cover of the greater Ajax. How this association, which shall always be a dear and proud recollection to me, came to be broken,—who snapped the threefold cord,—whether yourself (but I know that was not the case) grew ashamed of your former companions,—or whether (which is by much the more probable) some ungracious bookseller was author of the separation,—I cannot tell;—but wanting the support of your friendly elm (I speak for myself), my vine has, since that time, put forth few or no fruits; the sap (if ever it had any) has become, in a manner, dried up and extinct: and you will find your old associate, in his second volume, dwindled into prose and *criticism.*

Am I right in assuming this as the cause? or is it that, as years come upon us (except with some more healthy-happy spirits), life itself loses much of its poetry for us? we transcribe but what we read in the great volume of Nature; and, as the characters grow dim, we turn off, and look another way. You yourself write no Christabels, nor Ancient Mariners, now.

Some of the Sonnets, which shall be carelessly turned over by the general reader, may happily awaken in you remembrances, which I should be sorry should be ever totally extinct—the memory

Of summer days and of delightful years—

even so far back as to those old suppers at our old ********* Inn,—when life was fresh, and topics exhaustless,—and you first kindled in me, if not the power, yet the love of poetry, and beauty, and kindliness—

What words have I heard
Spoke at the Mermaid !

The world has given you many a shrewd nip and gird since that time, but either my eyes are grown dimmer, or my old friend is the *same*, who stood before me three-and-twenty years ago—his hair a little confessing the hand of time, but still shrouding the same capacious brain,—his heart not altered, scarcely where it "alteration finds."

One piece, Coleridge, I have ventured to publish in its original form, though I have heard you complain of a certain over-imitation of the antique in the style. If I could see any way of getting rid of the objection, without re-writing it entirely, I would make some sacrifices. But when I wrote John Woodvil, I never proposed to myself any distinct deviation from common English. I had been newly initiated in the writings of our elder dramatists; Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger, were then a *first love;* and from what I was so freshly conversant in, what wonder if my language imperceptibly took a tinge? The very *time*, which I had chosen for my story, that which immediately followed the Restoration, seemed to require, in an English play, that the English should be of rather an older cast, than that of the precise year in which it happened to be written. I wish it had not some faults, which I can less vindicate than the language.

I remain, my dear Coleridge,
Yours, with unabated esteem,
CHARLES LAMB.

FOUR Editions of the Works of Charles Lamb have already appeared, to the compilers and annotators of which the Editor of the Popular Centenary Edition has been largely and increasingly indebted.

First, that of 1818, in two small volumes, published by C. and J. Ollier, a collection of comparatively slight importance, seeing that it was issued from the press before a single word of Elia was written.

Secondly, that of 1840, published by E. Moxon in five parts, afterwards bound up together in one imperial octavo volume.

Thirdly, the expanded edition in four volumes, also published by E. Moxon, the first in 1868, the last in 1870, and which was edited by W. Carew Hazlitt.

Fourthly, that of 1874, published in one volume by Chatto and Windus, under the laborious and painstaking editorship of Richard Herne Shepherd.

To each of these, but more particularly to Mr. Carew Hazlitt and Mr. Herne Shepherd, the present Editor, in recognition of their labours upon ground, every inch of which he has himself retraversed while pursuing his own more minute and extended researches, would here offer his cordial acknowledgments.

THE

# WORKS OF CHARLES LAMB.

## Poetical Works.

### EARLIEST AND LATER SONNETS.

[The four sonnets immediately subjoined were the first poems, the first writings, in fact, Charles Lamb ever published. They originally appeared in 1796, as printed by the Robinsons of London, and published by Joseph Cottle of Bristol, in an insignificant-looking volume entitled "Poems on Various Subjects," by his friend and schoolfellow Samuel Taylor Coleridge, late of Jesus College, Cambridge. The latter touched up many of them unjustifiably in spite of their author's remonstrance "I charge you, Coleridge, spare my ewe lambs!" The last six lines of the second, as first printed, were entirely Coleridge's own. They are all now given, these first four sonnets of Charles Lamb, exactly as he wrote them, and with a scrupulous regard to his own reiterated emendations.]

I.

WAS it some sweet device of Faëry
That mock'd my steps with many a lonely glade,
And fancied wanderings with a fair-hair'd maid?
Have these things been? or what rare witchery,
Impregning with delights the charmed air,
Enlightened up the semblance of a smile
In those fine eyes? methought they spake the while
Soft soothing things, which might enforce despair
To drop the murdering knife, and let go by
His foul resolve. And does the lonely glade
Still court the footsteps of the fair-hair'd maid?
Still in her locks the gales of summer sigh?
While I forlorn do wander, reckless where,
And 'mid my wanderings meet no Anna there.

II.

METHINKS how dainty sweet it were, reclined
Beneath the vast out-stretching branches high
Of some old wood, in careless sort to lie,
Nor of the busier scenes we left behind

Aught envying. And, O Anna! mild-eyed maid!
Beloved! I were well content to play
With thy free tresses all a summer's day,
Losing the time beneath the greenwood shade.
Or we might sit and tell some tender tale
Of faithful vows repaid by cruel scorn,
A tale of true love, or of friend forgot;
And I would teach thee, lady, how to rail
In gentle sort, on those who practise not
Or love or pity, though of woman born.

III.

As when a child on some long winter's night
Affrighted clinging to its grandam's knees
With eager wondering and perturb'd delight
Listens strange tales of fearful dark decrees
Mutter'd to wretch by necromantic spell;
Or of those hags, who at the witching time
Of murky midnight ride the air sublime,
And mingle foul embrace with fiends of hell:
Cold Horror drinks its blood! Anon the tear
More gentle starts, to hear the beldame tell
Of pretty babes, that loved each other dear,
Murder'd by cruel Uncle's mandate fell:
Even such the shivering joys thy tones impart,
Even so thou, SIDDONS! meltest my sad heart!

IV.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT, BY THE SEA-SIDE AFTER A VOYAGE.

O, I could laugh to hear the midnight wind,
That, rushing on its way with careless sweep
Scatters the ocean waves. And I could weep
Like to a child. For now to my raised mind
On wings of winds comes wild-eyed Phantasy,
And her rude visions give severe delight.
O winged bark! how swift along the night
Pass'd thy proud keel; nor shall I let go by
Lightly of that drear hour the memory,
When wet and chilly on thy deck I stood,
Unbonneted, and gazed upon the flood,
Even till it seem'd a pleasant thing to die,—
To be resolved into th' elemental wave,
Or take my portion with the winds that rave.

[Charles Lamb having begun his career in authorship as a sonneteer, and having written to Coleridge with effusion, "I love my sonnets!" the first four are in this Centenary Edition of his Writings followed immediately by those he afterwards produced at various times. They are all arranged as nearly as possible in chronological order, being succeeded by the miscellaneous poems, which are also arranged chronologically.]

V.

WHEN last I roved these winding wood-walks green,
Green winding walks, and shady pathways sweet,
Ofttimes would Anna seek the silent scene,
Shrouding her beauties in the lone retreat.

No more I hear her footsteps in the shade:
Her image only in these pleasant ways
Meets me self-wandering, where in happier days
I held free converse with the fair-hair'd maid.
I pass'd the little cottage which she loved,
The cottage which did once my all contain;
It spake of days which ne'er must come again,
Spake to my heart, and much my heart was moved.
"Now fair befall thee, gentle maid!" said I,
And from the cottage turn'd me with a sigh.

VI.

A TIMID grace sits trembling in her eye,
As loth to meet the rudeness of men's sight,
Yet shedding a delicious lunar light,
That steeps in kind oblivious ecstasy
The care-crazed mind, like some still melody:
Speaking most plain the thoughts which do possess
Her gentle sprite: peace, and meek quietness,
And innocent loves, and maiden purity:
A look whereof might heal the cruel smart
Of changed friends, or fortune's wrongs unkind;
Might to sweet deeds of mercy move the heart
Of him who hates his brethren of mankind.
Turn'd are those lights from me, who fondly yet
Past joys, vain loves, and buried hopes regret.

VII.

IF from my lips some angry accents fell,
Peevish complaint, or harsh reproof unkind,
'Twas but the error of a sickly mind
And troubled thoughts, clouding the purer well,
And waters clear of Reason; and for me
Let this my verse the poor atonement be—
My verse, which though to praise wert ever inclined
Too highly, and with a partial eye to see
No blemish. Thou to me didst ever show
Kindest affection; and would ofttimes lend
An ear to the desponding love-sick lay,
Weeping my sorrows with me, who repay
But ill the mighty debt of love I owe,
Mary, to thee, my sister and my friend.

VIII.

WE were two pretty babes, the youngest she,
The youngest, and the loveliest far, I ween,
And INNOCENCE her name. The time has been,
We two did love each other's company;
Time was, we two had wept to have been apart.
But when by show of seeming good beguiled,
I left the garb and manners of a child,
And my first love for man's society,
Defiling with the world my virgin heart—

My loved companion dropped a tear, and fled,
And hid in deepest shades her awful head.
Beloved, who shall tell me where thou art—
In what delicious Eden to be found—
That I may seek thee the wide world around?

## IX.

### HARMONY IN UNLIKENESS.

By Enfield lanes, and Winchmore's verdant hill,
Two lovely damsels cheer my lonely walk:
The fair Maria, as a vestal, still;
And Emma brown, exuberant in talk.
With soft and lady speech the first applies
The mild correctives that to grace belong
To her redundant friend, who her defies
With jest, and mad discourse, and bursts of song.
O differing pair, yet sweetly thus agreeing,
What music from your happy discord rises,
While your companion hearing each, and seeing,
Nor this, nor that, but both together, prizes;
This lesson teaching, which our souls may strike,
That harmonies may be in things unlike!

## X.

### TO MARTIN CHARLES BURNEY.

[A dedicatory sonnet originally published at the beginning of the second volume of the 1818 edition of Charles Lamb's Works, as a prefix to his earliest essays and criticisms.]

Forgive me, Burney, if to thee these late
And hasty products of a critic pen,
Thyself no common judge of books and men,
In feeling of thy worth I dedicate.
My *verse* was offer'd to an older friend;
The humbler *prose* has fallen to thy share:
Nor could I miss the occasion to declare,
What spoken in thy presence must offend-
That, set aside some few caprices wild,
Those humorous clouds, that flit o'er brightest days,
In all my threadings of this worldly maze,
(And I have watch'd thee almost from a child,)
Free from self-seeking, envy, low design,
I have not found a whiter soul than thine.

## XI.

### WRITTEN AT CAMBRIDGE ON THE 15TH AUGUST, 1819.

I was not train'd in Academic bowers,
And to those learned streams I nothing owe
Which copious from those twin fair founts do flow;
Mine have been anything but studious hours.
Yet can I fancy, wandering 'mid thy towers,
Myself a nursling, Granta, of thy lap;
My brow seems tightening with the Doctor's cap,
And I walk *gowned;* feel unusual powers.

Strange forms of logic clothe my admiring speech,
Old Ramus' ghost is busy at my brain;
And my skull teems with notions infinite.
Be still, ye reeds of Camus, while I teach
Truths, which transcend the searching Schoolmen's vein,
And half had stagger'd that stout Stagirite!

## XII.

### TO MISS KELLY.

You are not, Kelly, of the common strain,
That stoop their pride and female honour down
To please that many-headed beast *the town*,
And vend their lavish smiles and tricks for gain;
By fortune thrown amid the actors' train,
You keep your native dignity of thought;
The plaudits that attend you come unsought,
As tributes due unto your natural vein.
Your tears have passion in them, and a grace
Of genuine freshness, which our hearts avow;
Your smiles are winds whose ways we cannot trace,
That vanish and return we know not how—
And please the better from a pensive face,
And thoughtful eye, and a reflecting brow.

## XIII.

### TO A CELEBRATED FEMALE PERFORMER IN "THE BLIND BOY."

[Published originally in the *Morning Chronicle*, the following sonnet, like the preceding one, addressed to Miss Kelly, was reproduced some years afterwards, without authority, in Hone's Every-Day Book. Whereupon Charles Lamb addressed to the editor of that ingenious publication the following whimsical and wonderfully characteristic letter, half in denial, as will be seen, half in indignation, but at the last wholly in acknowledgment of the sonnet as his: "Dear Sir," he wrote,—"Somebody has fairly played a *hoax* on you (I suspect that pleasant rogue M-x-n) in sending the sonnet in my name, inserted in your last number. True it is that I must own to the verses being mine, but not written on the occasion there pretended; for I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing the lady in the part of *Emmeline*, and I have understood that the force of her acting in it is in rather the expression of new-born sight than of the previous want of it. The lines were really written upon her performance in the *Blind Boy*, and appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* some years back. I suppose our facetious friend thought that they would serve again, like an old coat new turned.—Yours (and his nevertheless), C. Lamb."]

Rare artist! who with half thy tools, or none,
Canst execute with ease thy curious art,
And press thy powerful'st meanings on the heart,
Unaided by the eye, expression's throne!
While each blind sense, intelligential grown
Beyond its sphere, performs the effect of sight:
Those orbs alone, wanting their proper might,
All motionless and silent seem to moan
The unseemly negligence of nature's hand,
That left them so forlorn. What praise is thine,
O mistress of the passions; artist fine!
Who dost our souls against our sense command,
Plucking the horror from a sightless face,
Lending to blank deformity a grace.

## XIV.

### TO THE AUTHOR OF POEMS, PUBLISHED UNDER THE NAME OF BARRY CORNWALL.

(*London Magazine*, September, 1820.)

LET hate, or grosser heats, their foulness mask
Under the vizor of a borrow'd name;
Let things eschew the light deserving blame:
No cause hast thou to blush for thy sweet task.
"Marcian Colonna" is a dainty book;
And thy "Sicilian Tale" may boldly pass;
Thy "Dream" 'bove all, in which, as in a glass,
On the great world's antique glories we may look.
No longer then, as "lowly substitute,
Factor, or PROCTOR, for another's gains,"
Suffer the admiring world to be deceived;
Lest thou thyself, by self of fame bereaved,
Lament too late the lost prize of thy pains,
And heavenly tunes piped through an alien flute.

## XV.

### WORK.

WHO first invented work, and bound the free
And holyday-rejoicing spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of business in the green fields, and the town—
To plough, loom, anvil, spade—and oh! most sad,
To that dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood?
Who but the being unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
Task ever plies 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from which are no returnings:
Where toiling, and turmoiling ever and aye
He, and his thoughts, keep pensive working-day.

## XVI.

### LEISURE.

(*London Magazine*, April, 1821.)

THEY talk of time, and of time's galling yoke,
That like a mill-stone on man's mind doth press,
Which only works and business can redress:
Of divine Leisure such foul lies are spoke,
Wounding her fair gifts with calumnious stroke
But might I, fed with silent meditation,
Assoiled live from that fiend Occupation—
*Improbus Labor*, which my spirits hath broke—
I'd drink of time's rich cup, and never surfeit:
Fling in more days than went to make the gem,
That crown'd the white top of Methusalem:
Yea on my weak neck take, and never forfeit,
Like Atlas bearing up the dainty sky,
The heaven-sweet burthen of eternity.

DEUS NOBIS HÆC OTIA FECIT.

### XVII.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

ROGERS, of all the men that I have known
But slightly, who have died, your Brother's loss
Touch'd me most sensibly. There came across
My mind an image of the cordial tone
Of your fraternal meetings, where a guest
I more than once have sat; and grieve to think,
That of that threefold cord one precious link
By Death's rude hand is sever'd from the rest.
Of our old Gentry he appear'd a stem—
A Magistrate who, while the evil-doer
He kept in terror, could respect the Poor,
And not for every trifle harass them,
As some, divine and laic, too oft do.
This man's a private loss, and public too.

### XVIII.

THE GIPSY'S MALISON.

(*Blackwood's Magazine*, January, 1829.)

"SUCK, baby, suck, mother's love grows by giving,
Drain the sweet founts that only thrive by wasting;
Black manhood comes, when riotous guilty living
Hands thee the cup that shall be death in tasting.
Kiss, baby, kiss, mother's lips shine by kisses,
Choke the warm breath that else would fall in blessings;
Black manhood comes, when turbulent guilty blisses
Tend thee the kiss that poisons 'mid caressings.
Hang, baby, hang, mother's love loves such forces,
Strain the fond neck that bends still to thy clinging;
Black manhood comes, when violent lawless courses
Leave thee a spectacle in rude air swinging."
So sang a wither'd Beldam energetical,
And bann'd the ungiving door with lips prophetical.

### XIX.

ON THE SIGHT OF SWANS IN KENSINGTON GARDENS.

QUEEN-BIRD that sittest on thy shining nest,
And thy young cygnets without sorrow hatchest,
And thou, thou other royal bird, that watchest
Lest the white mother wandering feet molest:
Shrined are your offspring in a crystal cradle,
Brighter than Helen's ere she yet had burst
Her shelly prison. They shall be born at first
Strong, active, graceful, perfect, swan-like, able
To tread the land or waters with severity.
Unlike poor human births, conceived in sin,
In grief brought forth, both outwardly and in
Confessing weakness, error, and impurity.
Did heavenly creatures own succession's line,
The births of heaven like to yours would shine.

## XX.

### THE FAMILY NAME.

WHAT reason first imposed thee, gentle name,
Name that my father bore, and his sire's sire,
Without reproach? we trace our stream no higher;
And I, a childless man, may end the same.
Perchance some shepherd on Lincolnian plains,
In manners guileless as his own sweet flocks,
Received thee first amid the merry mocks
And arch allusions of his fellow swains.
Perchance from Salem's holier fields return'd,
With glory gotten on the heads abhorr'd
Of faithless Saracens, some martial lord
Took HIS meek title, in whose zeal he burn'd,
Whate'er the fount whence thy beginnings came,
No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name.

## XXI.

### TO JOHN LAMB, ESQ., OF THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE.

JOHN, you were figuring in the gay career
Of blooming manhood with a young man's joy,
When I was yet a little peevish boy—
Though time has made the difference disappear
Betwixt our ages, which *then* seem'd so great—
And still by rightful custom you retain,
Much of the old authoritative strain,
And keep the elder brother up in state.
O! you do well in this. 'Tis man's worst deed
To let the "things that have been" run to waste,
And in the unmeaning present sink the past:
In whose dim glass even now I faintly read
Old buried forms, and faces long ago,
Which you, and I, and one more, only know.

## XXII.

[Prefixed to this sonnet in Moxon's edition of 1840 of Charles Lamb's Poems, there was given, upon p. 40, the following explanatory note from the author's own hand:—"In a leaf of a quarto edition of the 'Lives of the Saints, written in Spanish by the learned and reverend father Alfonso Villegas, Divine of the Order of St. Dominick, set forth in English by John Heigham, Anno 1630,' bought at a Catholic bookshop in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, I found, carefully inserted, a painted flower, seemingly coeval with the book itself; and did not for some time discover that it opened in the middle, and was the cover to a very humble draught of a Saint Anne, with the Virgin and Child; doubtless the performance of some poor but pious Catholic, whose meditations it assisted."]

O LIFT with reverent hand that tarnish'd flower,
That shrines beneath her modest canopy
Memorials dear to Romish piety;
Dim specks, rude shapes of saints. in fervent hour

The work perchance of some meek devotee,
Who, poor in worldly treasures to set forth
The sanctities she worshipp'd to their worth,
In this imperfect tracery might see
Hints, that all Heaven did to her sense reveal.
Cheap gifts best fit poor givers. We are told
Of the love mite, the cup of water cold,
That in their way approved the offerer's zeal.
True love shows costliest, where the means are scant;
And, in their reckoning, they *abound*, who *want*.

## XXIII.

[The four following sonnets are, for the better completion of the series, transferred to this place by anticipation from the Album Verses, to which they more properly belong. His sonnets, however, being Charles Lamb's especial darlings, it has been thought advisable, as already intimated, that, as the poems begin with sonnets, the sonnets should be given here at once as a complete collection.]

### IN THE ALBUM OF ROTHA Q[UILLINAN].

A PASSING glance was all I caught of thee,
In my own Enfield haunts at random roving.
Old friends of ours were with thee, faces loving;
Time short: and salutations cursory,
Though deep and hearty. The familiar name
Of you, yet unfamiliar, raised in me
Thoughts—what the daughter of that man should be
Who call'd our Wordsworth friend. My thoughts did frame
A growing Maiden, who, from day to day
Advancing still in stature, and in grace,
Would all her lonely father's griefs efface,
And his paternal cares with usury pay.
I still retain the phantom, as I can;
And call the gentle image—Quillinan.

## XXIV.

### TO DORA W[ORDSWORTH], ON BEING ASKED BY HER FATHER TO WRITE IN HER ALBUM.

AN album is a banquet: from the store,
In his intelligential orchard growing,
Your sire might heap your board to overflowing;
One shaking of the tree—'twould ask no more
To set a salad forth, more rich than that
Which Evelyn in his princely cookery fancied:
Or that more rare, by Eve's neat hands enhanced,
Where a pleased guest, the angelic virtue sat.
But like the all-grasping founder of the feast,
Whom Nathan to the sinning king did tax,
From his less wealthy neighbours he exacts;
Spares his own flocks, and takes the poor man's beast.
Obedient to his bidding, lo, I am,
A zealous, meek, contributory——Lamb.

## XXV.

### IN THE ALBUM OF MRS. JANE TOWERS.

LADY unknown, who cravest from me unknown
The trifle of a verse these leaves to grace,
How shall I find fit matter? with what face
Address a face that ne'er to me was shown?
Thy looks, tones, gesture, manners, and what not,
Conjecturing, I wander in the dark.
I know thee only sister to Charles Clarke!
But at that name my cold Muse waxes hot,
And swears that thou art such a one as he,
Warm, laughter-loving, with a touch of madness,
Wild, glee-provoking, pouring oil of gladness
From frank heart without guile. And, if thou be
The pure reverse of this, and I mistake—
Demure one, I will like thee for his sake.

## XXVI.

### IN THE ALBUM OF EDITH S[OUTHEY].

(The *Athenæum*, 9th March, 1833.)

[Upon the opposite page is given a facsimile of this sonnet in Charles Lamb's own handwriting.]

IN Christian world MARY the garland wears!
REBECCA sweetens on a Hebrew's ear;
Quakers for pure PRISCILLA are more clear;
And the light Gaul by amorous NINON swears.
Among the lesser lights how LUCY shines!
What air of fragrance ROSAMOND throws around!
How like a hymn doth sweet CECILIA sound!
Of MARTHAS, and of ABIGAILS, few lines
Have bragg'd in verse. Of coarsest household stuff
Should homely JOAN be fashioned. But can
You BARBARA resist, or MARIAN?
And is not CLARE for love excuse enough?
Yet, by my faith in numbers, I profess,
These all, than Saxon EDITH, please me less.

In Ebony wears!
Rebecca
Quaker
And the clear;
Among ON swears. –
What Lucy shines!
How i throws round!
Of that sound!
Have ies
Shows household staff
You d. But can
And ?
Yet excuse enough!
These profess,
se me less.
C Lamb

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Warm, laughter-loving, with a touch of madness,
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What air of fragrance ROSAMOND throws around!
How like a hymn doth sweet CECILIA sound!
Of MARTHAS, and of ABIGAILS, few lines
Have bragg'd in verse. Of coarsest household stuff
Should homely JOAN be fashioned. But can
You BARBARA resist, or MARIAN?
And is not CLARE for love excuse enough?
Yet, by my faith in numbers, I profess,
These all, than Saxon EDITH, please me less.

In Christian world *Mary* the garland wears!
*Rebecca* sweetens on a Hebrew's ear;
Quakers for pure *Priscilla* are more clear;
And the light Gaul by amorous *Ninon* swears.—
Among the lesser lights how *Lucy* shines!
What air of fragrance *Rosamund* throws round!
How like a hymn doth sweet *Cecilia* sound!
Of *Marthas*, & of *Abigails*, few lines
Have bragg'd in verse. Of coursest household stuff
Should homely *Joan* be fashioned. But can
You *Barbara* resist, or *Marian*?
And is not *Clare* for love excuse enough?
Yet, by my faith in numbers, I profess,
These all, than Saxon *Edith*, please me less.

C Lamb

# Miscellaneous Poems.

[The initials C. L. were alone subscribed to the four earliest sonnets in 1796. Coleridge, however, at once identified the writer in his Preface as "Mr. Charles Lamb of the India House." During the following year, 1797, Charles Lamb and Charles Lloyd brought out at Bristol together with Coleridge, and afterwards apart from Coleridge, another collection of poems to which they contributed about equally. The issuing thus, almost timorously, in partnership with others, of one or two unpretending booklets, began for Charles Lamb—as by the first tender sproutings of a half-planted acorn—the growth of what has since struck the deepest roots in the affections of the English people, and has become a gnarled and enduring reputation.]

## PRELIMINARY MOTTO.

"This beauty in the blossom of my youth,
When my first fire knew no adulterate incense,
Nor I no way to flatter but my fondness
In the best language my true tongue could tell me,
And all the broken sighs my sick heart lend me,
I sued and served. Long did I love this lady."

MASSINGER.

## DEDICATION.

THE FEW FOLLOWING POEMS,
CREATURES OF THE FANCY AND THE FEELING,
IN LIFE'S MORE *VACANT* HOURS;
PRODUCED, FOR THE MOST PART, BY
LOVE IN IDLENESS;
ARE,
WITH ALL A BROTHER'S FONDNESS,
INSCRIBED TO
MARY ANN LAMB,
THE
AUTHOR'S BEST FRIEND AND SISTER.

## CHILDHOOD.

In my poor mind it is most sweet to muse
Upon the days gone by; to act in thought
Past seasons o'er, and be again a child;
To sit in fancy on the turf-clad slope,
Down which the child would roll; to pluck gay flowers,
Make posies in the sun, which the child's hand,
(Childhood offended, soon reconciled,)
Would throw away, and straight take up again,

Then fling them to the winds, and o'er the lawn
Bound with so playful and so light a foot,
That the press'd daisy scarce declined her head.

## THE GRANDAME.

On the green hill top,
Hard by the house of prayer, a modest roof,
And not distinguish'd from its neighbour barn,
Save by a slender-tapering length of spire,
The Grandame sleeps. A plain stone barely tells
The name and date to the chance passenger.
For lowly born was she, and long had eat,
Well-earn'd, the bread of service:—hers was else
A mounting spirit, one that entertain'd
Scorn of base action, deed dishonourable,
Or aught unseemly. I remember well
Her reverend image: I remember, too,
With what a zeal she served her master's house;
And how the prattling tongue of garrulous age
Delighted to recount the oft-told tale
Or anecdote domestic. Wise she was,
And wondrous skill'd in genealogies,
And could in apt and voluble terms discourse
Of births, of titles, and alliances;
Of marriages, and intermarriages;
Relationship remote, or near of kin;
Of friends offended, family disgraced,
Maiden high-born, but wayward, disobeying
Parental strict injunctions, and regardless
Of unmix'd blood, and ancestry remote,
Stooping to wed with one of low degree.
But these are not thy praises; and I wrong
Thy honour'd memory, recording chiefly
Things light or trivial. Better 'twere to tell,
How with a nobler zeal, and warmer love,
She served her *heavenly Master*. I have seen
That reverend form bent down with age and pain,
And rankling malady: yet not for this
Ceased she to praise her Maker, or withdraw
Her trust from him, her faith, and humble hope;
So meekly had she learn'd to bear her cross—
For she had studied patience in the school
Of Christ; much comfort she had thence derived,
And was a *follower* of the NAZARENE.

## THE SABBATH BELLS.

The cheerful sabbath bells, wherever heard,
Strike pleasant on the sense, most like the voice
Of one, who from the far-off hills proclaims
Tidings of good to Zion: chiefly when
Their piercing tones fall *sudden* on the ear
Of the contemplant, solitary man,
Whom thoughts abstruse or high have chanced to lure
Forth from the walks of men, revolving oft,
And oft again, hard matter, which eludes
And baffles his pursuit, thought-sick and tired
Of controversy, where no end appears,
No clue to his research, the lonely man
Half wishes for society again.
Him, thus engaged, the Sabbath bells salute
*Sudden!* his heart awakes: his ears drink in
The cheering music; his relenting soul

Yearns after all the joys of social life,
And softens with the love of human kind.

## FANCY EMPLOYED ON DIVINE SUBJECTS.

The truant Fancy was a wanderer ever,
A lone enthusiast maid. She loves to walk
In the bright visions of empyreal light,
By the green pastures, and the fragrant meads,
Where the perpetual flowers of Eden blow:
By crystal streams, and by the living waters,
Along whose margin grows the wondrous tree
Whose leaves shall heal the nations; underneath
Whose holy shade a refuge shall be found
From pain and want, and all the ills that wait
On mortal life, from sin and death for ever.

## THE TOMB OF DOUGLAS.

(SEE THE TRAGEDY OF THAT NAME.)

When her son, her Douglas, died,
To the steep rock's fearful side
Fast the frantic mother hied—

O'er her blooming warrior dead
Many a tear did Scotland shed,
And shrieks of long and loud lament
From her Grampian hills she sent.

Like one awakening from a trance
She met the shock of Lochlin's * lance;
On her rude invader foe
Return'd an hundredfold the blow,
Drove the taunting spoiler home;
Mournful thence she took her way
To do observance at the tomb
Where the son of Douglas lay.

Round about the tomb did go
In solemn state and order slow,
Silent pace, and black attire,
Earl or Knight, or good Esquire;
Whoe'er by deeds of valour done
In battle had high honours won;
Whoe'er in their pure veins could trace
The blood of Douglas' noble race.

With them the flower of minstrels came,
And to their cunning harps did frame
In doleful numbers piercing rhymes,
Such strains as in the older times
Had soothed the spirit of Fingal,
Echoing thro' his father's hall.

"Scottish maidens, drop a tear
O'er the beauteous Hero's bier!
Brave youth, and comely 'bove compare,
All golden shone his burnish'd hair;
Valour and smiling courtesy
Play'd in the sunbeams of his eye.
Closed are those eyes that shone so fair,
And stain'd with blood his yellow hair.
Scottish maidens, drop a tear
O'er the beauteous Hero's bier!

"Not a tear, I charge you, shed
For the false Glenalvon dead;
Unpitied let Glenalvon lie,
Foul stain to arms and chivalry!

"Behind his back the traitor came,
And Douglas died without his fame.
Young light of Scotland early spent,
Thy country thee shall long lament,
And oft to after-times shall tell,
In Hope's sweet prime my Hero fell."

* Denmark.

## TO CHARLES LLOYD.

(AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.)

[This early friend and sometime collaborateur of Charles Lamb survived the latter nearly five years, dying in 1839, at Versailles. Strange to say *his* wit, too, was with madness near allied. Poor Charles Lloyd had frequent paroxysms of insanity, expiring at last in a hopeless state of derangement.]

ALONE, obscure, without a friend,
A cheerless, solitary thing,
Why seeks my Lloyd the stranger out?
What offering can the stranger bring

Of social scenes, home-bred delights,
That him in aught compensate may
For Stowey's pleasant winter nights,
For loves and friendships far away?

In brief oblivion to forego
Friends such as thine, so justly dear,
And be awhile with me content
To stay, a kindly loiterer, here.

For this a gleam of random joy
Hath flush'd my unaccustom'd cheek;
And, with an o'ercharged bursting heart,
I feel the thanks I cannot speak.

O! sweet are all the Muses' lays,
And sweet the charm of matin bird—
'Twas long since these estranged ears
The sweeter voice of friend had heard.

The voice hath spoke: the pleasant sounds
In memory's ear in after-time
Shall live, to sometimes rouse a tear,
And sometimes prompt an honest rhyme.

For when the transient charm is fled,
And when the little week is o'er,
To cheerless, friendless solitude
When I return, as heretofore,

Long, long, within my aching heart,
The grateful sense shall cherish'd be;
I'll think less meanly of myself,
That Lloyd will sometimes think on me.

# Blank Verse.

[Written one half of it by Charles Lloyd, and the other half by Charles Lamb, "Blank Verse" appeared in 1798, as a small half-crown octavo of less than 100 pages, printed by T. Bensley, for the publishers, John and Arthur Arch, of No. 23, Gracechurch Street, in the city of London. Charles Lamb's was the later portion of the volume, his contributions, seven in number, extending from p. 71 to p. 95.]

## TO CHARLES LLOYD.

(AUGUST, 1797.)

A STRANGER, and alone, I past those scenes
We past so late together; and my heart
Felt something like desertion, when I look'd
Around me, and the well-known voice of friend
Was absent, and the cordial look was there
No more to smile on me. I thought on Lloyd;
All he had been to me. And now I go
Again to mingle with a world impure,
With men who make a mock of holy things
Mistaken, and of man's best hope think scorn.
The world does much to warp the heart of man,
And I may sometimes join its idiot laugh.
Of this I now complain not. Deal with me,
Omniscient Father! as thou judgest best,
And in thy season *tender* thou my heart.
I pray not for myself; I pray for him,
Whose soul is sore perplex'd: shine thou on him,
Father of Lights! and in the difficult paths
Make plain his way before him. His own thoughts
May he not think, his own ends not pursue;
So shall he best perform thy will on earth,
Greatest and Best, thy will be ever ours!

## WRITTEN ON THE DAY OF MY AUNT'S FUNERAL.

(FEBRUARY, 1797.)

[Immediately before her death, Charles Lamb wrote in one of his letters: "My poor old aunt, who was the kindest creature to me when I was at school, and used to bring me good things; when I, schoolboy-like, used to be ashamed to see her come, and open her apron, and bring out her basin with some nice thing which she had saved for me—the good old creature is now dying. She says, poor thing, she is glad she has come home to die with me. I was always her favourite."]

THOU too art dead, [Aunt Hetty]! very kind
Hast thou been to me in my childish days,
Thou best good creature. I have not forgot
How thou didst love thy Charles, when he was yet
A prating schoolboy: I have not forgot
The busy joy on that important day,

When, childlike, the poor wanderer was content
To leave the bosom of parental love,
His childhood's play-place, and his early home,
For the rude fosterings of a stranger's hand,
Hard uncouth tasks, and schoolboy's scanty fare.
How did thine eye peruse him round and round,
And hardly know him in his yellow coats,*
Red leathern belt, and gown of russet blue!
Farewell, good aunt!
Go thou and occupy the same grave-bed
Where the dead mother lies.
Oh my dear mother, oh thou dear dead saint!
Where's now that placid face, where oft hath sat
A mother's smile, to think her son should thrive
In this bad world, when she was dead and gone;
And where a tear hath sat (take shame, O son!)
When that same child has proved himself unkind.
One parent yet is left—a wretched thing,
A sad survivor of his buried wife,
A palsy-smitten, childish, old, old man,
A semblance most forlorn of what he was,
A merry cheerful man. A merrier man,
A man more apt to frame matter for mirth,
Mad jokes, and antics for a Christmas eve;
Making life social, and the laggard time
To move on nimbly, never yet did cheer
The little circle of domestic friends.

* The dress of Christ's Hospital

## WRITTEN A YEAR AFTER THE EVENTS.

(SEPTEMBER 1797.)

[Another glimmering forth of the hidden anguish of a life that for nearly forty years together—from the autumn of 1796 to the Christmas of 1834—was one of sustained and sublime self-sacrifice.]

ALAS! how am I changed! Where be the tears,
The sobs, and forced suspensions of the breath,
And all the dull desertions of the heart,
With which I hung o'er my dead mother's corse?
Where be the blest subsidings of the storm
Within, the sweet resignedness of hope
Drawn heavenward, and strength of filial love,
In which I bow'd me to my Father's will?
My God, and my Redeemer! keep not thou
My soul in brute and sensual thanklessness
Seal'd up; oblivious ever of that dear grace
And health restored to my long-loved friend,
Long-loved, and worthy known. Thou didst not leave
Her soul in death! O leave not now, my Lord,
Thy servants in far worse, in spiritual death!
And darkness blacker than those fearèd shadows
Of the valley all must tread. Lend us thy balms,
Thou dear Physician of the sin-sick soul,
And heal our cleansèd bosoms of the wounds
With which the world has pierced us thro' and thro'.
Give us new flesh, new birth. Elect of heaven
May we become; in thine election sure

Contain'd, and to one purpose steadfast drawn,
Our soul's salvation!
Thou, and I, dear friend,
With filial recognition sweet, shall know
One day the face of our dear mother in heaven;
And her remember'd looks of love shall greet
With looks of answering love; her placid smiles
Meet with a smile as placid, and her hand
With drops of fondness wet, nor fear repulse.
Be witness for me, Lord, I do not ask
Those days of vanity to return again
(Nor fitting me to ask, nor thee to give).
Vain loves and wanderings with a fair-hair'd maid,
Child of the dust as I am, who so long
My captive heart steep'd in idolatry
And creature-loves. Forgive me, O my Maker!
If in a mood of grief I sin almost
In sometimes brooding on the days long past,
And from the grave of time wishing them back,
Days of a mother's fondness to her child,
Her little one.
O where be now those sports,
And infant play-games? where the joyous troops
Of children, and the haunts I did so love?
O my companions, O ye lovèd names
Of friend or playmate dear; gone are ye now;
Gone diverse ways; to honour and credit some,
And some, I fear, to ignominy and shame!
I only am left, with unavailing grief,
To mourn one parent dead, and see one live
Of all life's joys bereft and desolate:
Am left with a few friends, and one, above
The rest, found faithful in a length of years,
Contented as I may, to bear me on
To the not unpeaceful evening of a day
Made black by morning storms!

## WRITTEN SOON AFTER THE PRECEDING POEM.

(OCTOBER, 1797.)

[The subjoined verses were afterwards eliminated by Charles Lamb from his collected poems, doubtless because of their having such frightfully direct reference to the circumstances of his mother's death—to that secret cupboard by his hearth, in which was hidden away something worse than a blood-stained skeleton; the mystery of his sister's madness and of her unwitting matricide.]

THOU should'st have longer lived, and to the grave
Have peacefully gone down in full old age!
Thy children would have tended thy gray hairs.
We might have sat, as we have often done,
By our fireside, and talk'd whole nights away,
Old times, old friends, and old events recalling;
With many a circumstance, of trivial note,
To memory dear, and of importance grown.
How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear?
A wayward son ofttimes was I to thee;
And yet, in all our little bickerings,
Domestic jars, there was, I know not what,
Of tender feeling, that were ill exchanged
For this world's chilling friendships, and their smiles
Familiar, whom the heart calls strangers still.
A heavy lot hath he, most wretched man!
Who lives the last of all his family;
He looks around him, and his eye discerns
The face of the stranger, and his heart is sick.

Man of the world, what canst thou do
for him?
Wealth is a burden, which he could
not bear;
Mirth a strange crime, the which he
dares not act;
And wine no cordial, but a bitter cup.
For wounds like his Christ is the only
cure,
And gospel promises are his by right,
For these were given to the poor in
heart.
Go, preach thou to him of a world to
come,
Where friends shall meet, and know
each other's face.
Say less than this, and say it to the
winds.

## WRITTEN ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1797.

[Eight years afterwards, in 1805, when Mary Lamb, to whom this poem is addressed, was again under confinement in a lunatic asylum, suffering from another of her frequent paroxysms of insanity, Charles wrote of her: "I am a fool bereft of her co-operation. I am used to look up to her in the least and biggest perplexities. To say all that I find her would be more than, I think, anybody could possibly understand. She is older, wiser, and better than I am; and all my wretched imperfections I cover to myself by thinking on her goodness."]

I AM a widow'd thing, now thou art
gone!
Now thou art gone, my own familiar
friend,
Companion, sister, helpmate, coun-
sellor!
Alas! that honour'd mind, whose
sweet reproof
And meekest wisdom in times past
have smooth'd
The unfilial harshness of my foolish
speech,
And made me loving to my parents
old,
(Why is this so, ah, God! why is this
so?)
That honour'd mind become a fearful
blank,
Her senses lock'd up, and herself kept
out
From human sight or converse, while
so many
Of the foolish sort are left to roam at
large,
Doing all acts of folly, and sin, and
shame?
Thy paths are mystery!
Yet I will not think,
Sweet friend, but we shall one day
meet, and live
In quietness, and die so, fearing God.
Or if *not*, and these false suggestions
be
A fit of the weak nature, loth to part
With what it loved so long, and held
so dear;
If thou art to be taken, and I left
(More sinning, yet unpunish'd, save
in thee),
It is the will of God, and we are clay
In the potter's hands; and, at the
worst, are made
From absolute nothing, vessels of dis-
grace,
Till, his most righteous purpose
wrought in us,
Our purified spirits find their perfect
rest.

## THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

(JANUARY, 1798.)

[This loveliest of Charles Lamb's poems began, in the original issue of it, with an inquiry, in a single line, and with a first stanza, afterwards omitted by the author as of too dreadful import. It bore allusion to that appalling tragedy, the reverent veiling and gentle endurance of which, during the rest of his existence, lifted the homely life of this poor city clerk and London man of letters to the height of antique heroism. What is said here of the friend he had left abruptly bore reference to a momentary estrangement from Coleridge. The interrogation, in answer to which the whole of this exquisite lament was chaunted, and the first terrible stanza, afterwards cancelled, are here restored as curiosities; but they are carefully barred off from what Charles Lamb, evidently, alone wished preserved, of a poem that, without them, is certainly "one entire and perfect chrysolite."]

[Where are they gone, the old familiar
faces?

I had a mother, but she died, and left me,
Died prematurely in a day of horrors—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.]

---

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women.
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man.
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my childhood.
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother!
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

For some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces

---

## COMPOSED AT MIDNIGHT.

From broken visions of perturbèd rest
I wake, and start, and fear to sleep again.
How total a privation of all sounds,
Sights, and familiar objects, man, bird, beast,
Herb, tree, or flower, and prodigal light of heaven!
'Twere some relief to catch the drowsy cry
Of the mechanic watchman, or the noise
Of revel, reeling home from midnight cups.
Those are the moanings of the dying man,
Who lies in the upper chamber; restless moans,
And interrupted only by a cough
Consumptive, torturing the wasted lungs.
So in the bitterness of death he lies,
And waits in anguish for the morning's light.
What can that do for him, or what restore?
Short taste, faint sense, affecting notices,
And little images of pleasures past,
Of health, and active life—(health not yet slain,
Nor the other grace of life, a good name, sold
For sin's black wages). On his tedious bed
He writhes, and turns him from th' accusing light,
And finds no comfort in the sun, but says
"When night comes I shall get a little rest."
Some few groans more, death comes, and there an end.
'Tis darkness and conjecture all beyond;
Weak nature fears, though charity must hope,
And fancy, most licentious on such themes,
Where decent reverence well had kept her mute,
Hath o'er-stock'd hell with devils, and brought down

By her enormous fablings, and mad lies,
Discredit on the gospel's serious truths
And salutary fears. The man of parts,
Poet, or prose declaimer, on his couch
Lolling, like one indifferent, fabricates
A heaven of gold, where he, and such as he,
Their heads encompassèd with crowns, their heels
With fine wings garlanded, shall tread the stars
Beneath their feet, heaven's pavement, far removed
From damnèd spirits, and the torturing cries
Of men, his brethren, fashion'd of the earth,
As he was, nourish'd with the selfsame breath,
Belike his kindred or companions once,
Through everlasting ages now divorced,
In chains and savage torments, to repent
Short years of folly on earth. Their groans unheard
In heaven, the saint nor pity feels, nor care,
For those thus sentenced—pity might disturb,
The delicate sense and most divine repose
Of spirits angelical. Blessed be God,
The measures of his judgments are not fix'd
By man's erroneous standard. He discerns
No such inordinate difference and vast
Betwixt the sinner and the saint, to doom
So disproportion'd fates. Compared with him,
No man on earth is holy call'd: they best
Stand in his sight approved, who at his feet
Their little crowns of virtue cast, and yield
To him of his own works the praise, his due.

## LIVING WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD.

[Originally published in 1799, at Bristol, in vol. i. pp. 90–92, of Joseph Cottle's Annual Anthology, edited by Robert Southey.]

MYSTERY of God! thou brave and beauteous world,
Made fair with light and shade and stars and flowers,
Made fearful and august with woods and rocks;
Jagg'd precipice, black mountain, sea in storms,
Sun, over all, that no co-rival owns,
But thro' Heaven's pavement rides as in despite
Or mockery of the littleness of man!
I see a mighty arm, by man unseen,
Resistless, not to be controll'd, that guides,
In solitude of unshared energies,
All these thy ceaseless miracles, O world!
Arm of the world, I view thee, and I muse
On Man, who, trusting in his mortal strength,
Leans on a shadowy staff, a staff of dreams.
We consecrate our total hopes and fears
To idols, flesh and blood, our love (heaven's due),
Our praise and admiration; praise bestow'd
By man on man, and acts of worship done
To a kindred nature, certes do reflect
Some portion of the glory and rays oblique
Upon the politic worshipper,—so man
Extracts a pride from his humility.
Some braver spirits of the modern stamp
Affect a Godhead nearer: these talk loud
Of mind, and independent intellect,
Of energies omnipotent in man;
And man of his own fate artificer;
Yea, of his own life lord, and of the days
Of his abode on earth, when time shall be,

That life immortal shall become an art,
Or Death, by chymic practices deceived,
Forego the scent, which for six thousand years
Like a good hound he has follow'd, or at length
More manners learning, and a decent sense
And reverence of a philosophic world,
Relent, and leave to prey on carcasses.
But these are fancies of a few: the rest,
Atheists, or Deists only in the name,
By word or deed deny a God. They eat
Their daily bread, and draw the breath of heaven
Without or thought or thanks; heaven's roof to them
Is but a painted ceiling hung with lamps,
No more, that lights them to their purposes.
They wander "loose about," they nothing see,
Themselves except, and creatures like themselves,
Short-lived, short-sighted, impotent to save.
So on their dissolute spirits, soon or late,
Destruction cometh "like an armèd man,"
Or like a dream of murder in the night,
Withering their mortal faculties, and breaking
The bones of all their pride.

## THEKLA'S SONG.

### BALLAD FROM THE GERMAN.

[Originally published in 1800, in Coleridge's translation from the German of Schiller's Piccolomini, or the first part of Wallenstein. As a prefix to it there, in a footnote, on p. 89, Coleridge wrote these words: "I cannot but add here an imitation of this song with which the author of 'The Tale of Rosamund Gray and Blind Margaret' has favoured me, and which appears to me to have caught the happiest manner of our old ballads." Coleridge, according to his wont, considerably modified these stanzas as they were originally published by him in the footnote to his translation of Piccolomini. Charles Lamb, however, restored them two years afterwards to what he regarded as their integrity when, in 1802, he appended them to his first imprint of John Woodvil. They are here given according to his own corrected version.]

THE clouds are blackening, the storms threatening,
And ever the forest maketh a moan;
Billows are breaking, the damsel's heart aching,
Thus by herself she singeth alone,
Weeping right plenteously.

The world is empty, the heart is dead surely,
In this world plainly all seemeth amiss;
To thy breast, Holy One, take now thy little one,
I have had earnest of all earth's bliss,
Living right lovingly.

# Poetry for Children.

[Originally published in 1809, in two duodecimo volumes, price three shillings, Poetry for Children was issued from the press as a portion of Godwin's Juvenile Library. Written conjointly by Charles and Mary Lamb, it was announced on its title-page as "by the author of Mrs. Leicester's School." No copy of this little work is now known to be anywhere in existence, but a reprint of its scattered contents, so far as they could be brought together proximately, was issued from the press in 1872 in the form of a thin octavo, edited by Richard Herne Shepherd. The pieces thus rearranged under the old title had, luckily, proved to be so far reclaimable from the fact of their having been incorporated, with acknowledgment, in 1810, in The First Book of Poetry for the Use of Schools, by W. F. Mylius. The poems here subjoined are, of course, restricted to those contributed by Charles Lamb to the collection.]

## HESTER.

WHEN maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavour.

A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed,
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flush'd her spirit.

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call :—if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool,
But she was train'd in Nature's school,
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind,
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour, gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some summer morning,

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet forewarning?

## THE THREE FRIENDS.

THREE young maids in friendship met;
Mary, Martha, Margaret.
Margaret was tall and fair,
Martha shorter by a hair;
If the first excell'd in feature,
Th' other's grace and ease were greater;
Mary, though to rival loth,
In their best gifts equall'd both.
They a due proportion kept;
Martha mourn'd if Margaret wept;
Margaret joy'd when any good
She of Martha understood;
And in sympathy for either
Mary was outdone by neither.
Thus far, for a happy space,
All three ran an even race,
A most constant friendship proving,
Equally beloved and loving;
All their wishes, joys, the same;
Sisters only not in name.

Fortune upon each one smiled,
As upon a favourite child;
Well to do and well to see
Were the parents of all three;
Till on Martha's father crosses
Brought a flood of worldly losses,
And his fortunes rich and great
Changed at once to low estate;
Under which o'erwhelming blow
Martha's mother was laid low;
She a hapless orphan left,
Of maternal care bereft,

Trouble following trouble fast,
Lay in a sick bed at last.

In the depth of her affliction
Martha now received conviction,
That a true and faithful friend
Can the surest comfort lend.
Night and day, with friendship tried,
Ever constant by her side
Was her gentle Mary found,
With a love that knew no bound;
And the solace she imparted
Saved her dying broken-hearted.

In this scene of earthly things
Not one good unmixèd springs.
That which had to Martha proved
A sweet consolation, moved
Different feelings of regret
In the mind of Margaret.
She, whose love was not less dear,
Nor affection less sincere
To her friend, was, by occasion
Of more distant habitation,
Fewer visits forced to pay her,
When no other cause did stay her;
And her Mary living nearer,
Margaret began to fear her,
Lest her visits day by day
Martha's heart should steal away.
That whole heart she ill could spare her,
Where till now she'd been a sharer.
From this cause with grief she pined,
Till at length her health declined.
All her cheerful spirits flew,
Fast as Martha gather'd new;
And her sickness waxèd sore,
Just when Martha felt no more.

Mary, who had quick suspicion
Of her alter'd friend's condition,
Seeing Martha's convalescence
Less demanded now her presence,
With a goodness, built on reason,
Changed her measures with the season;
Turn'd her steps from Martha's door,
Went where she was wanted more;
All her care and thoughts were set
Now to tend on Margarĕt.
Mary, living 'twixt the two,
From her home could oftener go,
Either of her friends to see,
Than they could together be.

Truth explain'd is to suspicion
Evermore the best physician.
Soon her visits had the effect;
All that Margaret did suspect,
From her fancy vanish'd clean;
She was soon what she had been,
And the colour she did lack
To her faded cheek came back.
Wounds which love had made her feel,
Love alone had power to heal.

Martha, who the frequent visit
Now had lost, and sore did miss it,
With impatience waxèd cross,
Counted Margaret's gain her loss;
All that Mary did confer
On her friend, thought due to her.
In her girlish bosom rise
Little foolish jealousies,
Which into such rancour wrought,
She one day for Margaret sought;
Finding her by chance alone,
She began, with reasons shown,
To insinuate a fear
Whether Mary was sincere;
Wish'd that Margaret would take heed
Whence her actions did proceed.
For herself, she'd long been minded
Not with outsides to be blinded;
All that pity and compassion,
She believed was affectation;
In her heart she doubted whether
Mary cared a pin for either.
She could keep whole weeks at distànce,
And not know of their existence,
While all things remain'd the same;
But when some misfortune came,
Then she made a great parade
Of her sympathy and aid,—
Not that she did really grieve,
It was only *make-believe*,
And she cared for nothing, so
She might her fine feelings show,
And get credit, on her part,
For a soft and tender heart.

With such speeches, smoothly made,
She found methods to persuade
Margaret (who, being sore
From the doubts she'd felt before,
Was preparèd for mistrust)
To believe her reasons just;

Quite destroy'd that comfort glad,
Which in Mary late she had;
Made her, in experience' spite,
Think her friend a hypocrite,
And resolve, with cruel scoff,
To renounce and cast her off.

See how good turns are rewarded!
She of both is now discarded,
Who to both had been so late
Their support in low estate,
All their comfort and their stay—
Now of both is cast away.
But the league her presence cherish'd,
Losing its best prop, soon perish'd;
She, that was a link to either,
To keep them and it together,
Being gone, the two (no wonder)
That were left, soon fell asunder;—
Some civilities were kept,
But the heart of friendship slept;
Love with hollow forms was fed,
But the life of love lay dead:—
A cold intercourse they held
After Mary was expell'd.

Two long years did intervene
Since they'd either of them seen,
Or, by letter, any word
Of their old companion heard,—
When, upon a day, once walking,
Of indifferent matters talking,
They a female figure met;—
Martha said to Margaret,
"That young maid in face does carry
A resemblance strong of Mary."
Margaret, at nearer sight,
Own'd her observation right:
But they did not far proceed
Ere they knew 'twas she indeed.
She—but, ah! how changed they view her
From that person which they knew her;
Her fine face disease had scarr'd,
And its matchless beauty marr'd:—
But enough was left to trace
Mary's sweetness—Mary's grace.
When her eye did first behold them,
How they blush'd!—but, when she told them,
How on a sick-bed she lay
Months, while they had kept away,
And had no inquiries made
If she were alive or dead;—
How, for want of a true friend,
She was brought near to her end,
And was like so to have died,
With no friend at her bed-side;—
How the constant irritation,
Caused by fruitless expectation
Of their coming, had extended
The illness, when she might have mended,—
Then, O then, how did reflection
Come on them with recollection!
All that she had done for them,
How it did their fault condemn!

But sweet Mary, still the same,
Kindly eased them of their shame;
Spoke to them with accents bland,
Took them friendly by the hand;
Bound them both with promise fast,
Not to speak of troubles past;
Made them on the spot declare
A new league of friendship there;
Which, without a word of strife,
Lasted thenceforth long as life.
Martha now and Margaret
Strove who most should pay the debt
Which they owed her, nor did vary
Ever after from their Mary

## TO A RIVER IN WHICH A CHILD WAS DROWNED.

SMILING river, smiling river,
On thy bosom sunbeams play;
Though they're fleeting, and retreating,
Thou hast more deceit than they.

In thy channel, in thy channel,
Choked with ooze and gravelly stones,
Deep immersèd, and unhearsèd,
Lies young Edward's corse: his bones

Ever whitening, ever whitening,
As thy waves against them dash:
What thy torrent, in the current,
Swallow'd, now it helps to wash.

As if senseless, as if senseless
Things had feeling in this case;
What so blindly and unkindly
It destroy'd, it now does grace.

## QUEEN ORIANA'S DREAM.

"On a bank with roses shaded,
Whose sweet scent the violets aided,
Violets whose breath alone
Yields but feeble smell or none,
(Sweeter bed Jove ne'er reposed on
When his eyes Olympus closed on,)
While o'erhead six slaves did hold
Canopy of cloth o' gold,
And two more did music keep,
Which might Juno lull to sleep,
Oriana who was queen
To the mighty Tamerlane,
That was lord of all the land
Between Thrace and Samarcand,
While the noon tide fervour beam'd,
Mused herself to sleep and *dream'd.*"

Thus far, in magnific strain,
A young poet soothed his vein,
But he had nor prose nor numbers
To express a princess' slumbers.—
Youthful Richard had strange fancies,
Was deep versed in old romances,
And could talk whole hours upon
The great Cham and Prester John,—
Tell the field in which the Sophy
From the Tartar won a trophy—
What he read with such delight of,
Thought he could as easily write of—
But his over-young invention
Kept not pace with brave intention.
Twenty suns did rise and set,
And he could no further get;
But, unable to proceed,
Made a virtue out of need,
And, his labours wiselier deem'd of,
Did omit *what the queen dream'd of.*

# Minor Poems.

## A BALLAD

NOTING THE DIFFERENCE OF RICH AND POOR.

IN THE WAYS OF A RICH MAN'S PALACE AND A POOR MAN'S WORKHOUSE.

*To the tune of the "Old and Young Courtier."*

In a costly palace Youth goes clad in gold;
In a wretched workhouse Age's limbs are cold:
There they sit, the old men by a shivering fire,
Still close and closer cowering, warmth is their desire.

In a costly palace, when the brave gallants dine,
They have store of good venison, with old canary wine,
With singing and music to heighten the cheer;
Coarse bits with grudging, are the pauper's best fare.

In a costly palace, Youth is still carest
By a train of attendants which laugh at my young Lord's jest;
In a wretched workhouse the contrary prevails:
Does age begin to prattle?—no man hearkeneth to his tales.

In a costly palace, if the child with a pin
Do but chance to prick a finger, straight the doctor is called in;
In a wretched workhouse, men are left to perish
For want of proper cordials which their old age might cherish.

In a costly palace, Youth enjoys his lust;
In a wretched workhouse Age, in corners thrust,
Thinks upon the former days, when he was well to do,
Had children to stand by him, both friends and kinsmen too.

In a costly palace, Youth his temples hides
With a new devised peruke that reaches to his sides;

In a wretched workhouse Age's crown
is bare, [out the cold air.
With a few thin locks, just to fence

In peace, as in war, 'tis our young gallants' pride
To walk, each one in the streets, with
a rapier by his side,
That none to do them injury may have
pretence; [offence.
Wretched Age, in poverty, must brook

## LINES ON THE CELEBRATED PICTURE

### BY LEONARDO DA VINCI; CALLED THE VIRGIN OF THE ROCKS.

While young John runs to greet
The greater Infant's feet,
The mother standing by, with trembling passion
Of devout admiration,
Beholds the engaging mystic play,
and pretty adoration;
Nor knows as yet the full event
Of those so low beginnings,
From whence we date our winnings,
But wonders at the intent
Of those new rites, and what that
strange child-worship meant.

But at her side
An angel doth abide,
With such a perfect joy
As no dim doubts alloy,
An intuition,
A glory, an amenity,
Passing the dark condition
Of blind humanity,
As if he surely knew
All the blest wonders should ensue,
Or he had lately left the upper sphere,
And had read all the sovran schemes
and divine riddles there.

## A VISION OF REPENTANCE.

I saw a famous fountain in my
dream, [led;
Where shady pathways to a valley
A weeping willow lay upon that
stream, [were spread
And all around the fountain brink
Wide branching trees, with dark green
leaf rich clad,
Forming a doubtful twilight desolate
and sad.

The place was such, that whoso
enter'd in, [thought,
Disrobèd was of every earthly
And straight became as one that
knew not sin,
Or to the world's first innocence
was brought; [ground,
Enseem'd it now, he stood on holy
In sweet and tender melancholy
wrapt around.

A most strange calm stole o'er my
soothèd sprite: [I staid,
Long time I stood, and longer had
When lo! I saw, saw by the sweet
moonlight, [silent shade,
Which came in silence o'er that
Where near the fountain SOMETHING
like DESPAIR
Made of that weeping willow garlands for her hair.

And eke with painful fingers she inwove [thorn—
Many an uncouth stem of savage
The willow garland, *that* was for
her love, [would adorn."
And *these* her bleeding temples
With sighs her heart nigh burst, salt
tears fast fell,
As mournfully she bended o'er that
sacred well.

To whom when I address'd myself to
speak, [said;
She lifted up her eyes, and nothing
The delicate red came mantling o'er
her cheek, [she fled
And, gathering up her loose attire,
To the dark covert of that woody
shade, [gentle maid.
And in her goings seem'd a timid

Revolving in my mind what this
should mean, [so;
And why that lovely lady plainèd
Perplex'd in thought at that mysterious scene, [or go,
And doubting if 'twere best to stay
I cast mine eyes in wistful gaze
around,
When from the shades came slow a
small and plaintive sound:

"PYSCHE* am I, who love to dwell
In these brown shades, this woody dell,
Where never busy mortal came,
Till now, to pry upon my shame.

"At thy feet what thou dost see
The waters of repentance be,
Which, night and day, I must augment
With tears, like a true penitent,

"If haply so my day of grace
Be not yet past; and this lone place,
O'er-shadowy, dark, excludeth hence
All thoughts but grief and penitence."

"*Why dost thou weep, thou gentle maid!*
*And wherefore in this barren shade*
*Thy hidden thoughts with sorrow feed?*
*Can thing so fair repentance need?*"

"O! I have done a deed of shame,
And tainted is my virgin fame,
And stain'd the beauteous maiden white,
In which my bridal robes were dight."

"*And who the promised spouse declare:*
*And what those bridal garments were?*"

"Severe and saintly righteousness
Composed the clear white bridal dress;
JESUS, the son of Heaven's high King,
Bought with his blood the marriage-ring.

"A wretched sinful creature, I
Deem'd lightly of that sacred tie,
Gave to a treacherous WORLD my heart,
And play'd the foolish wanton's part.

"Soon to these murky shades I came,
To hide from the sun's light my shame:
And still I haunt this woody dell,
And bathe me in that healing well,
Whose waters clear have influence
From sin's foul stains the soul to cleanse;

* The soul.

And night and day I them augment
With tears, like a true penitent,
Until, due expiation made,
And fit atonement fully paid,
The Lord and Bridegroom me present,
Where in sweet strains of high consent,
God's throne before, the Seraphim
Shall chaunt the ecstatic marriage hymn."

"*Now Christ restore thee soon*"—I said,
And thenceforth all my dream was fled.

## A FAREWELL TO TOBACCO.

(*The Reflector*, NO. IV. 1811.)

[Meditated during two years before it was committed to paper in 1805, but not published until six years afterwards. Reprinted in 1818 in the first collected edition of Charles Lamb's Works, these delightful lines were not only quoted entire, but introduced, with words expressive of the highest admiration, as long ago as in the 25th number, April, 1819, of Blackwood's Magazine, in a paper called *Horæ Nicotianæ*.]

MAY the Babylonish curse
Straight confound my stammering verse,
If I can a passage see
In this word-perplexity,
Or a fit expression find,
Or a language to my mind,
(Still the phrase is wide or scant)
To take leave of thee, GREAT PLANT!
Or in any terms relate
Half my love, or half my hate:
For I hate, yet love thee so,
That whichever thing I show,
The plain truth will seem to be
A constrain'd hyperbole,
And the passion to proceed
More from a mistress than a weed.

Sooty retainer to the vine,
Bacchus' black servant, negro fine;
Sorcerer, that makest us dote upon
Thy begrimed complexion,
And, for thy pernicious sake,
More and greater oaths to break

Than reclaimèd lovers take
'Gainst women: thou thy siege dost lay
Much too in the female way,
While thou suck'st the labouring breath
Faster than kisses or than death.

Thou in such a cloud dost bind us,
That our worst foes cannot find us,
And ill fortune, that would thwart us,
Shoots at rovers, shooting at us;
While each man, thro' thy heightening steam,
Does like a smoking Etna seem,
And all about us does express
(Fancy and wit in richest dress)
A Sicilian fruitfulness.

Thou through such a mist dost show us,
That our best friends do not know us,
And, for those allowèd features,
Due to reasonable creatures,
Liken'st us to fell Chimeras,
Monsters that, who see us, fear us;
Worse than Cerberus or Geryon,
Or, who first loved a cloud, Ixion.

Bacchus we know, and we allow
His tipsy rites. But what art thou,
That but by reflex canst show
What his deity can do,
As the false Egyptian spell
Aped the true Hebrew miracle?
Some few vapours thou may'st raise,
The weak brain may serve to amaze,
But to the reins and nobler heart
Canst nor life nor heat impart.

Brother of Bacchus, later born,
The old world was sure forlorn,
Wanting thee, that aidest more
The god's victories than before
All his panthers, and the brawls
Of his piping Bacchanals.
These, as stale, we disallow,
Or judge of *thee* meant: only thou
His true Indian conquest art;
And, for ivy round his dart,
The reformèd god now weaves
A finer thyrsus of thy leaves.

Scent to match thy rich perfume
Chemic art did ne'er presume
Through her quaint alembic strain,
None so sovereign to the brain.
Nature that did in thee excel,
Framed again no second smell.
Roses, violets, but toys
For the smaller sort of boys,
Or for greener damsels meant;
Thou art the only manly scent.

Stinking'st of the stinking kind,
Filth of the mouth and fog of the mind,
Africa, that brags her foyson,
Breeds no such prodigious poison,
Henbane, nightshade, both together,
Hemlock, aconite ——

Nay, rather,
Plant divine, of rarest virtue;
Blisters on the tongue would hurt you,
'Twas but in a sort I blamed thee;
None e'er prosper'd who defamed thee;
Irony all, and feign'd abuse,
Such as perplex'd lovers use,
At a need, when, in despair
To paint forth their fairest fair,
Or in part but to express
That exceeding comeliness
Which their fancies doth so strike
They borrow language of dislike;
And, instead of Dearest Miss,
Jewel, Honey, Sweetheart, Bliss,
And those forms of old admiring,
Call her Cockatrice and Siren,
Basilisk, and all that's evil,
Witch, Hyena, Mermaid, Devil,
Ethiop, Wench, and Blackamoor,
Monkey, Ape, and twenty more;
Friendly Traitress, loving Foe,—
Not that she is truly so,
But no other way they know
A contentment to express,
Borders so upon excess,
That they do not rightly wot
Whether it be pain or not.

Or, as men, constrain'd to part
With what's nearest to their heart,
While their sorrow's at the height,
Lose discrimination quite,
And their hasty wrath let fall,
To appease their frantic gall,
On the darling thing whatever,
Whence they feel it death to sever,
Though it be, as they, perforce,
Guiltless of the sad divorce.

For I must (nor let it grieve thee,
Friendliest of plants, that I must) leave thee.
For thy sake, TOBACCO, I
Would do anything but die,
And but seek to extend my days
Long enough to sing thy praise.
But, as she, who once hath been
A king's consort, is a queen
Ever after, nor will bate
Any title of her state,
Though a widow, or divorced,
So I, from thy converse forced,
The old name and style retain,
A right Katherine of Spain;
And a seat, too, 'mongst the joys
Of the blest Tobacco Boys;
Where, though I, by sour physician,
Am debarr'd the full fruition
Of thy favours, I may catch
Some collateral sweets, and snatch
Sidelong odours, that give life
Like glances from a neighbour's wife;
And still live in the by-places
And the suburbs of thy graces:
And in thy borders take deligh:
An unconquer'd Canaanite.

## TO T. L. H.—A CHILD.

[Leigh Hunt's eldest son, Thornton Hunt, who was born 10th September 1810, and died 25th June, 1873.]

MODEL of thy parent dear,
Serious infant worth a fear:
In thy unfaltering visage well
Picturing forth the son of TELL,
When on his forehead, firm and good,
Motionless mark, the apple stood;
Guileless traitor, rebel mild,
Convict unconscious, culprit-child!
Gates that close with iron roar
Have been to thee thy nursery door;
Chains that chink in cheerless cells
Have been thy rattles and thy bells;
Walls contrived for giant sin
Have hemm'd thy faultless weakness in;
Near thy sinless bed black Guilt
Her discordant house hath built,
And fill'd it with her monstrous brood—
Sights, by thee not understood-
Sights of fear, and of distress,
That pass a harmless infant's guess!

But the clouds, that overcast
Thy young morning, may not last.
Soon shall arrive the rescuing hour,
That yields thee up to Nature's power.
Nature, that so late doth greet thee,
Shall in o'er-flowing measure meet thee.
She shall recompense with cost
For every lesson thou hast lost.
Then wandering up thy sire's loved hill,*
Thou shalt take thy airy fill
Of health and pastime. *Birds shall sing*
*For thy delight each May morning.*
'Mid new-yean'd lambkins thou shalt play,
Hardly less a lamb than they.
Then thy prison's lengthen'd bound
Shall be the horizon skirting round.
And, while thou fill'st thy lap with flowers,
To make amends for wintry hours,
The breeze, the sunshine, and the place,
Shall from thy tender brow efface
Each vestige of untimely care,
That sour restraint had graven there;
And on thy every look impress
A more excelling childishness.

So shall be thy days beguiled,
THORNTON HUNT, my favourite child.

## THE TRIUMPH OF THE WHALE.

(*The Examiner*, 15 March, 1812.)

[Written by Charles Lamb as a lampoon on the Prince of Wales. "I'll l-lamb-pun him, Sir!" he once stammered out in a contest of wits, one of whom for the moment had threatened to eclipse him as a punster. Mr. John Forster has referred to these verses in his charming *In Memoriam* paper on Lamb, in the New Monthly Magazine of February, 1835, as "a sort of poetical, political libel."]

Io! Pæan! Io! sing
To the finny people's king.

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* Hampstead.

Not a mightier whale than this
In the vast Atlantic is;
Not a fatter fish than he
Flounders round the Polar Sea.
See his blubber—at his gills
What a world of drink he swills,
From his trunk as from a spout,
Which next moment he pours out.
Such his person; next declare,
Muse, who his companions are.
Every fish of generous kind
Scuds aside or slinks behind;
But about his presence keep
All the monsters of the deep;
Mermaids with their tails and singing
His delighted fancy stinging;
Crooked dolphins they surround him;
Dog-like seals they fawn around him.
Following hard the progress mark
Of the intolerant salt sea shark;
For his solace and relief
Flat-fish are his courtiers chief;
Last and lowest in his train
Ink-fish (libellers of the main)
Their black liquor shed in spite
(Such on earth *the things that write*).
In his stomach some do say
No good thing can ever stay;
Had it been the fortune of it
To have swallowed that old prophet,
Three days there he'd not have dwell'd,
But in one have been expell'd.
Hapless mariners are they,
Who beguiled (as seamen say)
Deeming him some rock or island,
Footing sure, safe spot, and dry land,
Anchor in his scaly rind;
Soon the difference they find;
Sudden plumb he sinks beneath them;
Does to ruthless waves bequeath them.
Name or title, what has he?
Is he Regent of the sea?
From this difficulty free us,
Buffon, Banks, or sage Linnæus.
With his wondrous attributes
Say what appellation suits?
By his bulk and by his size,
By his oily qualities,
This (or else my eyesight fails)
This should be the Prince of Whales.

# Album Verses,

## WITH A FEW OTHERS.

[These drawing-room effusions were originally published as a collection, in the form of a beautiful little duodecimo, of 150 pages, printed by Bradbury and Evans. Upon the title-page of the volume, as a dainty vignette, was the effigy of a Cupid writing. The work was issued from the press as a miniature *edition de luxe*, by Edward Moxon, that "bookseller of the poets, and poet among booksellers," as Leigh Hunt once called him in kindly antithesis. To him, indeed, in his double capacity as friend and publisher, the author inscribed these fugitive pieces in the subjoined dedicatory epistle, which is chiefly interesting from its explanation as to how it was this diminutive tome came at all into existence.]

### DEDICATION TO THE PUBLISHER.

DEAR MOXON,—I do not know to whom a Dedication of these Trifles is more properly due than to yourself. You suggested the printing of them. You were desirous of exhibiting a specimen of the *manner* in which Publications, entrusted to your future care, would appear. With more propriety, perhaps, the "Christmas," or some other of your own simple, unpretending Compositions, might have served this purpose. But I forget—you have bid a long adieu to the Muses. I had on my hands sundry Copies of Verses written for *Albums*—

> Those books kept by modern young ladies for show,
> Of which their plain grandmothers nothing did know—

or otherwise floating about in periodicals; which you have chosen in this manner to embody. I feel little interest in their publication. They are simply *Advertisement Verses*.

It is not for me, nor you, to allude in public to the kindness of our honoured friend, under whose auspices you are become a Bookseller. May that fine-minded Veteran in Verse enjoy life long enough to see his patronage justified! I venture to predict that your habits of industry, and your cheerful spirit, will carry you through the world. I am, Dear Moxon,

Your Friend and sincere Well-wisher,

ENFIELD, *1st June*, 1830. CHARLES LAMB.

### IN THE ALBUM OF A CLERGYMAN'S LADY.

AN Album is a Garden, not for show
Planted, but use; where wholesome herbs should grow.
A Cabinet of curious porcelain, where
No fancy enters, but what's rich or rare.
A Chapel, where mere ornamental things
Are pure as crowns of saints, or angels' wings.
A List of living friends: a holier Room
For names of some since mouldering in the tomb,
Whose blooming memories life's cold laws survive;
And, dead elsewhere, they here yet speak, and live.
Such, and so tender, should an Album be;
And, Lady, such I wish this book to thee.

## IN THE AUTOGRAPH BOOK OF MRS. SERJEANT W——.

HAD I a power, Lady, to my will,
You should not want Hand Writings. I would fill
Your leaves with Autographs—resplendent names
Of Knights and Squires of old, and courtly Dames,
Kings, Emperors, Popes. Next under these should stand
The hands of famous lawyers—a grave band—
Who in their Courts of Law or Equity
Have best upheld Freedom and Property.
These should moot cases in your book, and vie,
To show their reading and their Serjeantry.
But I have none of these; nor can I send
The notes by Bullen to her Tyrant penn'd
In her authentic hand; nor in soft hours
Lines writ by Rosamund in Clifford's bowers.
The lack of curious Signatures I moan,
And want the courage to subscribe my own.

## IN THE ALBUM OF LUCY BARTON.

LITTLE Book, surnamed of *white*,
Clean as yet, and fair to sight,
Keep thy attribution right.

Never disproportion'd scrawl;
Ugly blot, that's worse than all;
On thy maiden clearness fall!

In each letter, here design'd,
Let the reader emblem'd find
Neatness of the owner's mind.

Gilded margins count a sin,
Let thy leaves attraction win
By the golden rules within;

Sayings fetch'd from sages old;
Laws which Holy Writ unfold,
Worthy to be graved in gold:

Lighter fancies not excluding;
Blameless wit, with nothing rude in
Sometimes mildly interluding

Amid strains of graver measure:
Virtue's self hath oft her pleasure
In sweet Muses' groves of leisure.

Riddles dark, perplexing sense;
Darker meanings of offence;
What but *shades*—be banish'd hence.

Whitest thoughts in whitest dress,
Candid meanings, best express
Mind of quiet Quakeress.

## IN THE ALBUM OF MISS ——.

(*Blackwood's Magazine*, May, 1829.)

I.

SUCH goodness in your face doth shine,
With modest look, without design,
That I despair, poor pen of mine
Can e'er express it,
To give it words I feebly try;
My spirits fail me to supply
Befitting language for 't, and I
Can only bless it!

II.

But stop, rash verse! and don't abuse
A bashful Maiden's ear with news
Of her own virtues. She'll refuse
Praise sung so loudly.
Of that same goodness, you admire,
The best part is, she don't aspire
To praise—nor of herself desire
To think too proudly.

## IN THE ALBUM OF A VERY YOUNG LADY.

JOY to unknown Josepha who, I hear,
Of all good gifts, to Music most is given;
Science divine, which through the enraptured ear
Enchants the soul, and lifts it nearer Heaven.
Parental smiles approvingly attend
Her pliant conduct of the trembling keys,
And listening strangers their glad suffrage lend.
Most musical is Nature. Birds—and bees
At their sweet labour—sing. The moaning winds
Rehearse a *lesson* to attentive minds.
In louder tones "Deep unto deep doth call;"
And there is music in the waterfall.

## IN THE ALBUM OF A FRENCH TEACHER.

IMPLORED for verse, I send you what
I can;
But you are so exact a Frenchwoman,
As I am told, Jemima, that I fear
To wound with English your Parisian
ear,
And think I do your choice collection
wrong
With lines not written in the Frenchman's tongue.
Had I a knowledge equal to my will,
With airy *Chansons* I your leaves
would fill;
With *Fabliaux* that should emulate
the vein
Of sprightly Gresset, or of La Fontaine;
Or *Scènes Comiques*, that should
approach the air
Of your own favourite — renown'd
Molière.
But at my suit the Muse of France
looks sour,
And strikes me dumb! Yet, what is
in my power
To testify respect for you, I pray,
Take in plain English—our rough
Enfield way.

## IN THE ALBUM OF MISS DAUBENY.

I.

SOME poets by poetic law
Have beauties praised they never saw;
And sung of Kittys and of Nancys,
Whose charms but lived in their own
fancies.
So I, to keep my Muse a-going,
That willingly would still be doing,
A Canzonet or two must try
In praise of—*pretty* Daubeny.

II.

But whether she indeed be comely,
Or only very good and homely,
Of my own eyes I cannot say;
I trust to Emma Isola,
But sure I think her voice is tuneful,
As smoothest birds that sing in June
full;
For else would strangely disagree
The *flowing* name of—Daubeny.

III.

I hear that she a Book hath got—
As what young damsel now hath not,
In which they scribble favourite fancies,
Copied from poems or romances?
And prettiest draughts, of her design,
About the curious Album shine;
And therefore she shall have for me
The style of—*tasteful* Daubeny.

IV.

Thus far I have taken on believing:
But well I know without deceiving,
That in her heart she keeps alive still
Old school-day likings, which survive
still
In spite of absence—worldly coldness—
And thereon can my Muse take boldness
To crown her other praises three
With praise of—*friendly* Daubeny.

## IN MY OWN ALBUM.

FRESH clad from heaven in robes of
white,
A young probationer of light,
Thou wert my soul, an Album bright,

A spotless leaf; but thought, and care,
And friend and foe, in foul or fair,
Have "written strange defeatures"
there;

And Time with heaviest hand of all,
Like that fierce writing on the wall,
Hath stamp'd sad dates — he can't
recall;

And error gilding worst designs—
Like speckled snake that strays and
shines—
Betrays his path by crooked lines;

And vice hath left his ugly blot:
And good resolves, a moment hot,
Fairly began—but finish'd not;

And fruitless, late remorse doth
trace—
Like Hebrew lore a backward pace—
Her irrecoverable race.

Disjointed numbers ; sense unknit ;
Huge reams of folly, shreds of wit ;
Compose the mingled mass of it.

My scalded eyes no longer brook
Upon this ink-blurr'd thing to look—
Go, shut the leaves, and clasp the book.

## ANGEL HELP.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1827.)

[Quoted in Blackwood's Magazine within little more than two years after their first appearance, that is, in August, 1830, these lines were introduced thus: "Charles! we love the following strain," the critic adding with effusion, at their close, "Oh! rare Charles Lamb!" An explanatory note appended to the poem by the lyrist himself tells the reader how they were "Suggested by a drawing in the possession of Charles Aders, Esq., in which is represented the legend of a poor female saint who, having spun past midnight, to maintain a bedridden mother, has fallen asleep from fatigue, and angels are finishing her work. In another part of the chamber," he adds, "an angel is tending a lily, the emblem of purity."]

THIS rare tablet doth include
Poverty with Sanctitude.
Past midnight this poor Maid hath spun,
And yet the work is not half done,
Which must supply from earnings scant
A feeble bed-rid parent's want.
Her sleep-charged eyes exemption ask,
And holy hands take up the task ;
Unseen the rock and spindle ply,
And do her earthly drudgery.
Sleep, saintly poor one, sleep, sleep on ;
And, waking, find thy labours done.
Perchance she knows it by her dreams ;
Her eye hath caught the golden gleams,
Angelic presence testifying,
That round her everywhere are flying ;
Ostents from which she may presume,
That much of Heaven is in the room.
Skirting her own bright hair they run,
And to the sunny add more sun :
Now on that aged face they fix,
Streaming from the Crucifix ;
The flesh-clogg'd spirit disabusing,
Death-disarming sleeps infusing.
Prelibations, foretastes high,
And equal thoughts to live or die.
Gardener bright from Eden's bower,
Tend with care that lily flower ;
To its leaves and root infuse
Heaven's sunshine, Heaven's dews.
'Tis a type, and 'tis a pledge,
Of a crowning privilege.
Careful as that lily flower,
This Maid must keep her precious dower ;
Live a sainted Maid, or die
Martyr to virginity.

Virtuous poor ones, sleep, sleep on,
And waking find your labours done.

## THE CHRISTENING.

(*Blackwood's Magazine*, May, 1829.)

[These verses were written in celebration of the christening of the infant son of Charles and Mary Gisburne May, on the 25th March, 1829, at Enfield, Charles and Mary Lamb standing, on the occasion, as sponsors.]

ARRAY'D—a half-angelic sight—
In vests of pure Baptismal white,
The Mother to the Font doth bring
The little helpless nameless thing,
With hushes soft and mild caressing,
At once to get—a name and blessing.
Close by the Babe the Priest doth stand,
The Cleansing Water at his hand,
Which must assoil the soul within
From every stain of Adam's sin.
The Infant eyes the mystic scenes,
Nor knows what all this wonder means ;
And now he smiles, as if to say
"I am a Christian made this day ;"
Now frighted clings to Nurse's hold,
Shrinking from the water cold,
Whose virtues, rightly understood,
Are, as Bethesda's waters, good.
Strange words—the World, the Flesh, the Devil—
Poor Babe, what can it know of Evil?
But we must silently adore
Mysterious truths, and not explore.

Enough for him, in after-times,
When he shall read these artless rbymes,
If, looking back upon this day
With quiet conscience, he can say
"I have in part redeem'd the pledge
Of my Baptismal privilege;
And more and more will strive to flee
All which my Sponsors kind did then renounce for me."

## ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN.

I SAW where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work.
A floweret crushèd in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,
Was in a cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying;
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark: ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say, that Nature blind
Check'd her hand, and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finish'd pattern without fault?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lack'd she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sicken'd)
That should thy little limbs have quicken'd?
Limbs so firm, they seem'd to assure
Life of health, and days mature:
Woman's self in miniature!
Limbs so fair; they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry,
That babe, or mother, one must die;
So in mercy left the stock,
And cut the branch; to save the shock
Of young years widow'd; and the pain,
When Single State comes back again
To the lone man who, 'reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maimèd life?
The economy of Heaven is dark;
And wisest clerks have miss'd the mark,
Why Human Buds, like this, should fall,
More brief than fly ephemeral,
That has his day; while shrivell'd crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones;
And crabbed use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss.
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells and baby clothes;
Coral redder than those lips,
Which pale death did late eclipse;
Music framed for infants' glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave;
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie,
A more harmless vanity?

## TO BERNARD BARTON.

[These lines, addressed to the Quaker Poet, were transmitted to him "With a Coloured Print," as a note of the author's intimates, "from the venerable and ancient Manufactory of Carrington Bowles. Some of my readers," added Lamb, in 1830, "may recognize it." Few, if any of them, will be likely to do so now.]

WHEN last you left your Woodbridge pretty,
To stare at sights, and see the City,
If I your meaning understood,
You wish'd a Picture, cheap, but good;
The colouring? decent; clear, not muddy;
To suit a Poet's quiet study,
Where Books and Prints for delectation
Hang, rather than vain ostentation.

The subject? what I pleased, if comely;
But something scriptural and homely:
A sober Piece, not gay or wanton,
For winter fire-sides to descant on,
The theme so scrupulously handled,
A Quaker might look on unscandal'd;
Such as might satisfy Ann Knight,
And Classic Mitford just not fright.
Just such a one I've found and send it;
If liked, I give—if not, but lend it.
The moral? nothing can be sounder.
The fable? 'tis its own expounder—
A Mother teaching to her Chit
Some good book, and explaining it.
He, silly urchin, tired of lesson,
His learning lays no mighty stress on,
But seems to hear not what he hears;
Thrusting his fingers in his ears,
Like Obstinate, that perverse funny one,
In honest parable of Bunyan.
His working Sister, more sedate,
Listens; but in a kind of state,
The painter meant for steadiness,
But has a tinge of sullenness;
And, at first sight, she seems to brook
As ill her needle, as he his book.
This is the Picture. For the Frame—
'Tis not ill-suited to the same;
Oak-carved, not gilt, for fear of falling;
Old fashion'd; plain, yet not appalling;
And sober, as the Owner's Calling.

## THE YOUNG CATECHIST.

[Lines suggested, as the author's foot-note intimates, by "a picture by Henry Meyer, Esq."]

While this tawny Ethiop prayeth,
Painter, who is she that stayeth
By, with skin of whitest lustre,
Sunny locks, a shining cluster,
Saint-like seeming to direct him
To the Power that must protect him?
Is she of the Heaven-born Three,
Meek Hope, strong Faith, sweet Charity:
Or some Cherub?—
They you mention
Far transcend my weak invention.
'Tis a simple Christian child,
Missionary young and mild,
From her stock of Scriptural knowledge,
Bible-taught without a college,
Which by reading she could gather,
Teaches him to say Our Father
To the common Parent, who
Colour not respects, nor hue.
White and black in him have part,
Who looks not to the skin, but heart.

## SHE IS GOING.

For their elder sister's hair
Martha does a wreath prepare
Of bridal rose, ornate and gay:
To-morrow is the wedding day:
She is going.

Mary, youngest of the three,
Laughing idler, full of glee,
Arm in arm does fondly chain her,
Thinking, poor trifler, to detain her—
But she's going.

Vex not, maidens, nor regret
Thus to part with Margaret.
Charms like yours can never stay
Long within doors; and one day
You'll be going.

## TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

### ON HER TWENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY.

[The young friend thus tenderly addressed was Emma Isola (afterwards Mrs. Edward Moxon), one of Charles Lamb's especial child-favourites.]

Crown me a cheerful goblet, while I pray
A blessing on thy years, young Isola;
Young, but no more a child. How swift have flown
To me thy girlish times, a woman grown
Beneath my heedless eyes! In vain I rack
My fancy to believe the almanack,
That speaks thee twenty-one. Thou should'st have still
Remain'd a child, and at thy sovereign will

Gambol'd about our house, as in times past.
Ungrateful Emma, to grow up so fast,
Hastening to leave thy friends !—for which intent,
Fond Runagate, be this thy punishment.
After some thirty years, spent in such bliss
As this earth can afford, where still we miss
Something of joy entire, may'st thou grow old
As we whom thou hast left! That wish was cold.
O far more aged and wrinkled, till folks say,
Looking upon thee reverend in decay,
"This dame for length of days, and virtues rare,
With her respected grandsire may compare."—
Grandchild of that respected Isola,
Thou should'st have had about thee on this day
Kind looks of parents, to congratulate
Their pride grown up to woman's grave estate.
But they have died, and left thee, to advance
Thy fortunes how thou may'st, and owe to chance
The friends which Nature grudged. And thou wilt find,
Or make such, Emma, if I am not blind
To thee and thy deservings. That last strain
Had too much sorrow in it. Fill again
Another cheerful goblet, while I say
"Health, and twice health, to our lost Isola."

---

## TO THE SAME.

EXTERNAL gifts of fortune or of face,
Maiden, in truth, thou hast not much to show;
Much fairer damsels have I known, and know,
And richer may be found in every place.
In thy *mind* seek thy beauty and thy wealth.
Sincereness lodgeth there, the soul's best health.
O guard that treasure above gold or pearl,
Laid up secure from moths and worldly stealth—
And take my benison, plain-hearted girl.

---

## TO JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES,

### ON HIS TRAGEDY OF VIRGINIUS.

(*London Magazine*, September, 1820.)

[As originally published in the London Magazine, these complimentary verses had prefixed to them the odd misprint of *R.* S. Knowles, which, still more strangely, was repeated ten years afterwards, when they were reissued towards the end of the little volume containing the Album Verses.]

TWELVE years ago I knew thee, Knowles, and then
Esteemèd you a perfect specimen
Of those fine spirits warm-soul'd Ireland sends,
To teach us colder English how a friend's
Quick pulse should beat. I knew you brave, and plain,
Strong-sensed, rough-witted, above fear or gain;
But nothing further had the gift to espy.
Sudden you re-appear. With wonder I
Hear my old friend (turn'd Shakspeare) read a scene
Only to *his* inferior in the clean
Passes of pathos: with such fence-like art—
Ere we can see the steel, 'tis in our heart.
Almost without the aid language affords,
Your piece seems wrought. That huffing medium, *words*,
(Which in the modern Tamburlaines quite sway
Our shamed souls from their bias) in your play
We scarce attend to. Hastier passion draws
Our tears on credit: and we find the cause

Some two hours after, spelling o'er again
Those strange few words at ease, that wrought the pain.
Proceed, old friend; and, as the year returns,
Still snatch some new old story from the urns
Of long-dead virtue. We, that knew before
Your worth, may admire, we cannot love you more.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE "EVERY-DAY BOOK."

(*London Magazine*, May, 1825.)

I LIKE you, and your book, ingenious Hone!
In whose capacious all-embracing leaves
The very marrow of tradition's shown;
And all that history—much that fiction—weaves.

By every sort of taste your work is graced.
Vast stores of modern anecdote we find,
With good old story quaintly interlaced—
The theme as various as the reader's mind.

Rome's life-fraught legends you so truly paint—
Yet kindly,—that the half-turn'd Catholic
Scarcely forbears to smile at his own saint,
And cannot curse the candid heretic.

Rags, relics, witches, ghosts, fiends, crowd your page;
Our father's mummeries we well-pleased behold,
And, proudly conscious of a purer age,
Forgive some fopperies in the times of old.
Verse-honouring Phœbus, Father of bright *Days*,
Must needs bestow on you both good and many,
Who, building trophies of his Children's praise,
Run their rich Zodiac through, not missing any.

Dan Phœbus loves your book—trust me, friend Hone—
The title only errs, he bids me say:
For while such art, wit, reading, there are shown,
He swears, 'tis not a work of *every day*.

## TO CAROLINE MARIA APPLEBEE.

### AN ACROSTIC.

CAROLINE glides smooth in verse,
And is easy to rehearse;
Runs just like some crystal river
O'er its pebbly bed for ever.
Lines as harsh and quaint as mine
In their close at least will shine,
Nor from sweetness can decline,
Ending but with *Caroline*.

*Maria* asks a statelier pace—
"*Ave Maria*, full of grace!"
Romish rites before me rise,
Image-worship, sacrifice,
And well-meant but mistaken pieties.

*Apple* with *Bee* doth rougher run.
Paradise was lost by one;
Peace of mind would we regain,
Let us, like the other, strain
Every harmless faculty,
Bee-like at work in our degree,
Ever some sweet task designing,
Extracting still, and still refining.

## TO CECILIA CATHERINE LAWTON.

### AN ACROSTIC.

CHORAL service, solemn chanting,
Echoing round cathedrals holy—
Can aught else on earth be wanting
In heaven's bliss to plunge us wholly?
Let us great *Cecilia* honour
In the praise we give unto them,
And the merit be upon her.

Cold the heart that would undo them,
And the solemn organ banish
That this sainted Maid invented.
Holy thoughts too quickly vanish,
Ere the expression can be vented.
Raise the song to *Catherine*,
In her torments most divine!
Ne'er by Christians be forgot—
Envied be—this Martyr's lot.

*Lawton*, who these *names* combinest,
Aim to emulate their praises;
Women were they, yet divinest
Truths they taught; and story raises
O'er their mouldering bones a Tomb,
Not to die till Day of Doom.

## TO A LADY WHO DESIRED ME TO WRITE HER EPITAPH.

AN ACROSTIC.

GRACE JOANNA here doth lie:
Reader, wonder not that I
Ante-date her hour of rest.
Can I thwart her wish exprest,
Even unseemly though the laugh

Jesting with an Epitaph?
On her bones the turf lie lightly,
And her rise again be brightly!
No dark stain be found upon her—
No, there will not, on mine honour—
Answer that at least I can.
Would that I, thrice happy man,
In as spotless garb might rise,
Light as she will climb the skies,
Leaving the dull earth behind,
In a car more swift than wind.
All her errors, all her failings,
(Many they were not) and ailings,
Sleep secure from Envy's railings.

## TO HER YOUNGEST DAUGHTER.

ANOTHER ACROSTIC.

LEAST Daughter, but not least beloved, of *Grace!*
O frown not on a stranger, who from place
Unknown and distant these few lines hath penn'd.
I but report what thy instructress Friend
So oft hath told us of thy gentle heart.
A pupil most affectionate thou art,

Careful to learn what elder years impart.
*Louisa—Clare*—by which name shall I call thee?
A prettier pair of names sure ne'er was found,
Resembling thy own sweetness in sweet sound.
Ever calm peace and innocence befall thee!

# Translations from the Latin of Vincent Bourne.

[The English Latin poet, Vincent Bourne, who flourished between 1700 and 1747, published in 1734, the "Poemata," which secured him his reputation. One-and-twenty of Bourne's poems, it may be remembered, Cowper had already honoured by translating.]

## I.

### ON A SEPULCHRAL STATUE OF AN INFANT SLEEPING.

BEAUTIFUL Infant, who dost keep
Thy posture here, and sleep'st a marble sleep,
May the repose unbroken be,
Which the fine Artist's hand hath lent to thee,
While thou enjoy'st along with it
That which no art, or craft, could ever hit,
Or counterfeit to mortal sense,
The heaven-infusèd sleep of Innocence!

## II.

### THE RIVAL BELLS.

A TUNEFUL challenge rings from either side
Of Thames' fair banks. Thy twice six Bells, Saint Bride,
Peal swift and shrill; to which more slow reply
The deep-toned eight of Mary Overy.
Such harmony from the contention flows,
That the divided ear no preference knows;
Betwixt them both disparting Music's State,
While one exceeds in number, one in weight.

## III.

### EPITAPH ON A DOG.

POOR Irus' faithful wolf-dog here I lie,
That wont to tend my old blind master's steps,
His guide and guard; nor, while my service lasted,
Had he occasion for that staff, with which
He now goes picking out his path in fear
Over the highways and crossings, but would plant
Safe in the conduct of my friendly string,
A firm foot forward still, till he had reach'd
His poor seat on some stone, nigh where the tide
Of passers-by in thickest confluence flow'd:
To whom with loud and passionate laments
From morn to eve his dark estate he wail'd.
Nor wail'd to all in vain: some here and there,
The well-disposed and good, their pennies gave.
I meantime at his feet obsequious slept;
Not all-asleep in sleep, but heart and ear
Prick'd up at his least motion, to receive

At his kind hand my customary crumbs,
And common portion in his feast of scraps;
Or when night warn'd us homeward, tired and spent
With our long day, and tedious beggary.
These were my manners, this my way of life,
Till age and slow disease me overtook,
And sever'd from my sightless master's side.
But lest the grace of so good deeds should die,
Through tract of years in mute oblivion lost,
This slender tomb of turf hath Irus rear'd,
Cheap monument of no ungrudging hand,
And with short verse inscribed it, to attest,
In long and lasting union to attest,
The virtues of the Beggar and his Dog.

## IV.

### THE BALLAD SINGERS.

[The allusion in the first line of this poem is to "Seven Dials," the column formerly standing in the centre of which has long been removed.]

WHERE seven fair Streets to one tall Column draw,
Two Nymphs have ta'en their stand, in hats of straw;
Their yellower necks huge beads of amber grace,
And by their trade they're of the Sirens' race:
With cloak loose-pinn'd on each, that has been red,
But long with dust and dirt discolourèd
Belies its hue; in mud behind, before,
From heel to middle leg becrusted o'er.
One a small infant at the breast does bear;
And one in her right hand her tuneful ware,
Which she would vend. Their station scarce is taken,
When youths and maids flock round. His stall forsaken,
Forth comes a Son of Crispin, leathern-capt,
Prepared to buy a ballad, if one apt
To move his fancy offers. Crispin's sons
Have, from uncounted time, with ale and buns
Cherish'd the gift of *Song*, which sorrow quells;
And, working single in their low-roof'd cells,
Oft cheat the tedium of a winter's night
With anthems warbled in the Muses' spight.
Who now hath caught the alarm? the Servant Maid
Hath heard a buzz at distance; and, afraid
To miss a note, with elbows red comes out.
Leaving his forge to cool, Pyracmon stout
Thrusts in his unwash'd visage. *He* stands by,
Who the hard trade of Porterage does ply,
With stooping shoulders. What cares he? he sees
The assembled ring, nor heeds his tottering knees,
But pricks his ears up with the hopes of song.
So, while the Bard of Rhodope his wrong
Bewail'd to Proserpine on Thracian strings,
The tasks of gloomy Orcus lost their stings,
And stone-vex'd Sysiphus forgets his load.
Hither and thither from the sevenfold road
Some cart or waggon crosses, which divides
The close-wedged audience; but, as when the tides
To ploughing ships give way, the ship being past,
They re-unite, so these unite as fast,
The older Songstress hitherto hath spent
Her elocution in the argument

Of their great Song in *prose;* to wit, the woes
Which Maiden true to faithless Sailor owes—
Ah! "*Wandering He!*" — which now in loftier *verse*
Pathetic they alternately rehearse.
All gaping wait the event. This Critic opes
His right ear to the strain. The other hopes
To catch it better with his left. Long trade
It were to tell, how the deluded Maid
A victim fell. And now right greedily
All hands are stretching forth the songs to buy,
That are so tragical; which she, and she,
Deals out, and *sings the while*, nor can there be
A breast so obdurate here, that will hold back
His contribution from the gentle rack
Of Music's pleasing torture. Irus' self
The staff-propt Beggar, his thin-gotten pelf
Brings out from pouch, where squalid farthings rest,
And boldly claims his ballad with the best.
An old Dame only lingers. To her purse
The penny sticks. At length, with harmless curse,
"Give me," she cries. "I'll paste it on my wall,
While the wall lasts, to show what ills befall
Fond hearts, seduced from Innocency's way;
How Maidens fall, and Mariners betray."

---

## V.

TO DAVID COOK, WATCHMAN OF THE PARISH OF ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER.

FOR much good-natured verse received from thee,
A loving verse take in return from me.
"Good morrow to my masters," is your cry;
And to our David, "twice as good," say I.
Not Peter's monitor, shrill chanticleer,
Crows the approach of dawn in notes more clear,
Or tells the hours more faithfully. While night
Fills half the world with shadows of affright,
You with your lantern, partner of your round,
Traverse the paths of Margaret's hallow'd bound.
The tales of ghosts which old wives' ears drink up,
The drunkard reeling home from tavern cup,
Nor prowling robber, your firm soul appal;
Arm'd with thy faithful staff thou slight'st them all.
But if the market gardener chance to pass,
Bringing to town his fruit, or early grass,
The gentle salesman you with candour greet,
And with reiterated "good-mornings" meet.
Announcing your approach by formal bell,
Of nightly weather you the changes tell;
Whether the Moon shines, or her head doth steep
In rain-portending clouds. When mortals sleep
In downy rest, you brave the snows and sleet
Of winter; and in alley, or in street,
Relieve your midnight progress with a verse.
What though fastidious Phœbus frown averse
On your didactic strain—indulgent Night
With caution hath seal'd up both ears of Spite,
And critics sleep while you in staves do sound
The praise of long-dead Saints, whose Days abound
In wintry months; but Crispin chief proclaim:
Who stirs not at that Prince of Cobblers' name?

Profuse in loyalty some couplets shine,
And wish long days to all the Brunswick line!
To youths and virgins they chaste lesson read;
Teach wives and husbands how their lives to lead;
Maids to be cleanly, footmen free from vice;
How death at last all ranks doth equalize;
And, in conclusion, pray good years befall,
With store of wealth, your "worthy masters all."
For this and other tokens of good-will,
On Boxing-day may store of shillings fill
Your Christmas purse; no householder give less,
When at each door your blameless suit you press:
And what you wish to us (it is but reason)
Receive in turn—the compliments o' th' season!

---

## VI.

### ON A DEAF AND-DUMB ARTIST.

(*Benjamin Ferrers, who died* A.D. 1732.)

AND hath thy blameless life become
A prey to the devouring tomb?
A more mute silence hast thou known,
A deafness deeper than thine own,
While Time was? and no friendly Muse,
That mark'd thy life, and knows thy dues,
Repair with quickening verse the breach,
And write thee into light and speech?
The Power, that made the Tongue, restrain'd
Thy lips from lies, and speeches feign'd;
Who made the Hearing, without wrong
Did rescue thine from Siren's song.
He let thee *see* the ways of men,
Which thou with pencil, not with pen,
Careful Beholder, down didst note,
And all their motley actions quote,
Thyself unstain'd the while. From look
Or gesture reading, more than *book*,
In letter'd pride thou took'st no part,
Contented with the Silent Art,
Thyself as silent. Might I be
As speechless, deaf, and good, as He!

---

## VII.

### NEWTON'S PRINCIPIA.

GREAT Newton's self, to whom the world's in debt,
Owed to school mistress sage his Alphabet;
But quickly wiser than his teacher grown,
Discover'd properties to her unknown;
Of A *plus* B, or *minus*, learn'd the use,
Known quantities from unknown to educe;
And made—no doubt to that old dame's surprise—
The Christ-cross-row his ladder to the skies.
Yet, whatsoe'er geometricians say,
Her lessons were his true PRINCIPIA!

---

## VIII.

### THE HOUSEKEEPER.

THE frugal snail, with forecast of repose,
Carries his house with him, where'er he goes;
Peeps out—and if there comes a shower of rain,
Retreats to his small domicile amain.
Touch but a tip of him, a horn—'tis well—
He curls up in this sanctuary shell.
He's his own landlord, his own tenant; stay
Long as he will, he dreads no Quarter-day.
Himself he boards and lodges; both invites,
And feasts, himself; sleeps with himself o' nights.

He spares the upholsterer trouble to procure
Chattels; himself is his own furniture,
And his sole riches. Wheresoe'er he roam—
Knock when you will—he's sure to be at home.

---

## IX.

### THE FEMALE ORATORS.

[The two words italicised at the end of the fourth line had in the original edition as an elucidatory foot-note "*Billingis*" in the Latin.]

NIGH London's famous bridge, a Gate more famed
Stands, or once stood, from old Belinus named,
So judged antiquity; and therein wrongs
A name, allusive strictly to *two tongues.*
Her school hard by the Goddess Rhetoric opes,
And *gratis* deals to oyster-wives her tropes.
With Nereid green, green Nereid disputes,
Replies, rejoins, confutes, and still confutes.
One her coarse sense by metaphors expounds,
And one in literalities abounds;
In mood and figure these keep up the din:
Words multiply, and every word tells in.
Her hundred throats here bawling Slander strains;
And unclothed Venus to her tongue gives reins
In terms, which Demosthenic force outgo,
And baldest jests of foul-mouth'd Cicero.
Right in the midst great Ate keeps her stand,
And from her sovereign station taints the land.
Hence Pulpits rail; grave Senates learn to jar;
Quacks scold; and Billingsgate infects the Bar.

## PINDARIC ODE TO THE TREAD-MILL.

I.

INSPIRE my spirit, Spirit of De Foe,
That sang the Pillory,
In loftier strains to show
A more sublime Machine
Than that, where thou wert seen,
With neck out-stretch'd and shoulders ill awry,
Courting coarse plaudits from vile crowds below—
A most unseemly show!

II.

In such a place
Who could expose thy face,
Historiographer of deathless Crusoe!
That paint'st the strife
And all the naked ills of savage life,
Far above Rousseau?
Rather myself had stood
In that ignoble wood,
Bare to the mob, on holyday or high-day.
If nought else could atone
For waggish libel,
I swear on bible,
I would have spared him for thy sake alone,
Man Friday!

III.

Our ancestors' were sour days,
Great Master of Romance!
A milder doom had fallen to thy chance
In our days:
Thy sole assignment
Some solitary confinement,
(Not worth thy care a carrot,)
Where in world-hidden cell
Thou thy own Crusoe might have acted well,
Only without the parrot;
By sure experience taught to know,
Whether the qualms thou makest him feel were truly such or no.

IV.

But stay! methinks in statelier measure—
A more companionable pleasure—

I see thy steps the mighty Tread Mill trace,
(The subject of my song,
Delay'd however long,)
And some of thine own race,
To keep thee company, thou bring'st with thee along.
There with thee go,
Link'd in like sentence,
With regulated pace and footing slow,
Each old acquaintance,
Rogue — harlot — thief—that live to future ages;
Through many a labour'd tome,
Rankly embalm'd in thy too natural pages.
Faith, friend Defoe, thou art quite at home!
Not one of thy great offspring thou dost lack,
From pirate Singleton to pilfering Jack,
Here Flandrian Moll her brazen incest brags;
Vice-stript Roxana, penitent in rags,
There points to Amy, treading equal chimes,
The faithful handmaid to her faithless crimes.

V.

Incompetent my song to raise
To its just height thy praise,
Great Mill!
That by thy motion proper
(No thanks to wind, or sail, or working rill)
Grinding that stubborn corn, the human will,
Turn'st out men's consciences,
That were begrimed before, as clean and sweet
As flour from purest wheat,
Into thy hopper.
All reformation short of thee but nonsense is,
Or human, or divine.

VI.

Compared with thee,
What are the labours of that Jumping Sect,
Which feeble laws connive at rather than respect?
Thou dost not bump,
Or jump,
But *walk* men into virtue; betwixt crime
And slow repentance giving breathing time,
And leisure to be good;
Instructing with discretion demi-reps
How to direct their steps.

VII.

Thou best Philosopher made out of wood!
Not that which framed the tub,
Where sate the Cynic cub,
With nothing in his bosom sympathetic;
But from those groves derived, I deem,
Where Plato nursed his dream
Of immortality;
Seeing that clearly
Thy system all is merely
Peripatetic.
Thou to thy pupils dost such lessons give
Of how to live
With temperance, sobriety, morality,
(A new art,)
That from thy school, by force of virtuous deeds,
Each Tyro now proceeds
A "Walking Stewart!"

---

## GOING OR GONE.

I.

FINE merry franions,
Wanton companions.
My days are even banyans
With thinking upon ye;
How death that last stinger,
Finis-writer, end-bringer,
Has laid his chill finger,
Or is laying on ye.

II.

There's rich Kitty Wheatley,
With footing it featly
That took me completely,
She sleeps in the Kirk House;
And poor Polly Perkin,
Whose dad was still firking
The jolly ale firkin,
She's gone to the Work-house:

III.

Fine gardener, Ben Carter
(In ten counties no smarter)
Has ta'en his departure
For Proserpine's orchards;
And Lily, postilion,
With cheeks of vermilion,
Is one of a million
That fill up the church-yards;

IV.

And, lusty as Dido
Fat Clemitson's widow
Flits now a small shadow
By Stygian hid ford;
And good master Clapton
Has thirty years nap't on,
The ground he last hap't on,
Intomb'd by fair Widford;

V.

And gallant Tom Dockwra,
Of Nature's finest crockery,
Now but thin air and mockery,
Lurks by Avernus,
Whose honest grasp of hand
Still, while his life did stand,
At friend's or foe's command,
Almost did burn us.

VI.

Roger de Coverley
Not more good man than he
Yet has he equally
Push'd for Cocytus,
With drivelling Worral,
And wicked old Dorrell,
'Gainst whom I've a quarrel,
Whose end might affright us!—

VII.

Kindly hearts have I known;
Kindly hearts, they are flown;
Here and there if but one
Linger yet uneffaced,
Imbecile tottering elves,
Soon to be wreck'd on shelves,
These scarce are half themselves,
With age and care crazed.

VIII.

But this day Fanny Hutton
Her last dress has put on;
Her fine lessons forgotten,
She died, as the dunce died:
And prim Betsy Chambers,
Decay'd in her members,
No longer remembers
Things as she once did;

IX.

And prudent Miss Wither
Not in jest now doth *wither*
And soon must go—whither
Nor I well, nor you know;
And flaunting Miss Waller,
*That* soon must befall her,
Whence none can recall her,
Though proud once as Juno!

---

## ON R. B. HAYDON'S "JERUSALEM."

[In the "Poetical Recreations of the Champion and his Literary Correspondents," published in London, in 1822, there appeared on opposite pages 188 and 189, the following dozen lines, here in Latin, here in English: the former facetiously signed in one word Carlagnulus; the latter simply subscribed with the writer's initials, C. L. The title prefixed to this tribute in the original is subjoined.]

IN TABULAM EXIMII PICTORIS B. HAYDONI, IN QUÂ SOLYMÆI, ADVENIENTE DOMINO, PALMAS IN VIÂ PROSTERNENTES MIRÂ ARTE DEPINGUNTUR.

Quid vult iste equitans? et quid velit iste virorum
Palmifera ingens turba, et vox tremebunda Hosanna,
Hosanna Christo semper semperque canamus.

Palma fuit Senior pictor celeberrimus olim;
Sed palmam cedat, modò si foret ille superstes,
Palma, Haydone, tibi: tu palmas omnibus aufers.

Palma negata macrum, donataque reddit opimum.
Si simul incipiat cum famâ increscere corpus,
Tu citò pinguesces, fies et, amicule, obesus.

Affectant lauros pictores atque poetæ,
Sin laurum invideant (sed quis tibi?) laurigerentes,
Pro lauro palmâ viridanti tempora cingas.

### TRANSLATION.

WHAT rider's that? and who those myriads bringing
Him on his way with palms, Hosannas singing?
Hosanna to the Christ, Heaven—Earth—should still be ringing.

In days of old, old Palma won renown:
But Palma's self must yield the painter's crown,
Haydon, to thee. Thy palms put every other down.

If Flaccus' sentence with the truth agree,
That "palms awarded make men plump to be,"
Friend Horace, Haydon soon in bulk shall match with thee.

Painters with poets for the laurel vie:
But should the laureat band thy claims deny,
Wear thou thy own green palm, Haydon, triumphantly.

## TO MY FRIEND THE INDICATOR.

(The *Indicator*, 27th September, 1820.)

YOUR easy Essays indicate a flow,
Dear friend, of brain which we may elsewhere seek;
And to their pages I and hundreds owe,
That Wednesday is the sweetest of the week.
Such observation, wit, and sense, are shown,
We think the days of Bickerstaff return'd;
And that a portion of that oil you own,
In his undying midnight lamp which burn'd.
I would not lightly bruise old Priscian's head
Or wrong the rules of grammar understood;
But, with the leave of Priscian be it said,
The *Indicative* is your *Potential Mood.*
Wit, poet, prose-man, party-man, translator—
H[unt], your best title yet is *Indicator.*

# Satan in Search of a Wife.

[Published originally in 1831, by Edward Moxon, at 64, New Bond Street, in the form of a curious little duodecimo, fantastically illustrated with woodcuts, and entitled—at full length—"Satan in Search of a Wife; with the whole Process of his Courtship and Marriage, and who Danced at the Wedding. By an Eye Witness." The whole is a sort of diabolical skit upon "The Loves of the Angels," by Thomas Moore, to whose readers, in fact, as will be seen, this whimsical *jeu d'ésprit* is with covert irony inscribed.]

## DEDICATION.

To delicate bosoms, that have sighed over the *Loves of the Angels*, this poem is with tenderest regard consecrated. It can be no offence to you, dear ladies, that the author has endeavoured to extend the dominion of your darling passion; to show love triumphant in places, to which his advent has been never yet suspected. If one Cecilia drew an Angel down, another may have leave to attract a spirit upwards; which, I am sure, was the most desperate adventure of the two. Wonder not at the inferior condition of the agent; for, if King Cophetua wooed a beggar-maid, a greater king need not scorn to confess the attractions of a fair tailor's daughter. The more disproportionate the rank, the more signal is the glory of your sex. Like that of Hecate, a triple empire is now confessed your own. Nor Heaven, nor Earth, nor deepest tracts of Erebus, as Milton hath it, have power to resist your sway. I congratulate your last victory. You have fairly made an honest man of the Old One; and, if your conquest is late, the success must be salutary. The new Benedict has employment enough on his hands to desist from dabbling with the affairs of poor mortals; he may fairly leave human nature to herself; and we may sleep for one while at least secure from the attacks of this hitherto restless Old Bachelor. It remains to be seen, whether the world will be much benefited by the change in his condition.

## PART THE FIRST.

I.

The Devil was sick and queasy of late,
And his sleep and his appetite fail'd him;
His ears they hung down, and his tail it was clapp'd
Between his poor hoofs, like a dog that's been rapp'd—
None knew what the devil ail'd him.

II.

He tumbled and toss'd on his mattress o' nights,
That was fit for a fiend's disportal;
For 'twas made of the finest of thistles and thorn,
Which Alecto herself had gather'd in scorn
Of the best down beds that are mortal.

III.

His giantly chest in earthquakes heaved,
With groanings corresponding;
And mincing and few were the words he spoke,
While a sigh, like some delicate whirlwind, broke
From a heart that seem'd desponding.

IV.

Now the Devil an old wife had for his
dam.
I think none e'er was older:
Her years—old Parr's were nothing to
them;
And a chicken to her was Methusalem,
You'd say, could you behold her.

V.

She remember'd Chaos a little child,
Strumming upon hand organs;
At the birth of Old Night a gossip she
sat,
The ancientest there, and was god-
mother at
The christening of the Gorgons.

VI.

Her bones peep'd through a rhino-
ceros' skin,
Like a mummy's through its cere-
ment;
But she had a mother's heart, and
guess'd
What pinch'd her son; whom she
thus address'd
In terms that bespoke endearment.

VII.

"What ails my Nicky, my darling
Imp,
My Lucifer bright, my Beelze?
My Pig, my Pug-with-a-curly-tail,
You are not well. Can a mother fail
To see *that* which all Hell see?"

VIII.

"O mother dear, I am dying, I fear;
Prepare the yew, and the willow,
And the cypress black: for I get no
ease
By day or by night for the cursed fleas
That skip about my pillow."

IX.

"Your pillow is clean, and your pil-
low-beer,
For I wash'd 'em in Styx last night,
son,
And your blankets both, and dried
them upon
The brimstony banks of Acheron—
It is not the *fleas* that bite, son."

X.

"O I perish of cold these bitter sharp
nights,
The damp like an ague ferrets;
The ice and the frost hath shot into
the bone;
And I care not greatly to sleep alone
O' nights—for the fear of spirits."

XI.

"The weather is warm, my own
sweet boy,
And the nights are close and stifl-
ing;
And for fearing of spirits, you cow-
ardly elf—
Have you quite forgot you're a spirit
yourself?
Come, come, I see you are trifling.

XII.

"I wish my Nicky is not is love—"
"O mother, you have nick'd it—"
And he turn'd his head aside with a
blush—
Not red hot pokers or crimson plush,
Could half so deep have prick'd it.

XIII.

"These twenty thousand good years
or more,"
Quoth he, "on this burning shingle
I have led a lonesome bachelor's life,
Nor known the comfort of babe or
wife—
'Tis a long time to live single."

XIV.

Quoth she, "If a wife is all you want,
I shall quickly dance at your wed-
ding.
I am dry nurse, you know, to the
female ghosts—"
And she call'd up her charge, and
they came in hosts
To do the old beldam's bidding:

XV.

All who in their lives had been ser-
vants of sin—
Adulteress, wench, virago—
And murd'resses old that had pointed
the knife
Against a husband's or father's life,
Each one a she Iago.

XVI.

First Jezebel came—no need of paint
  Or dressing, to make her charming;
For the blood of the old prophetical race
Had heighten'd the natural flush of her face
  To a pitch 'bove rouge or carmine.

XVII.

Semiramis there low tender'd herself,
  With all Babel for a dowry:
With Helen, the flower and the bane of Greece—
And bloody Medea next offer'd her fleece,
  That was of Hell the houri.

XVIII.

Clytemnestra, with Joan of Naples, put in;
  Cleopatra, by Antony quicken'd;
Jocasta, that married where she should not,
Came hand in hand with the daughters of Lot,
  'Till the Devil was fairly sicken'd.

XIX.

For the Devil himself, a devil as he is,
  Disapproves unequal matches.
"O mother," he cried, "despatch them hence
No spirit—I speak it without offence—
  Shall have me in her hatches."

XX.

With a wave of her wand they all were gone!
  And now came out the slaughter:
"'Tis none of these that can serve my turn;
For a wife of flesh and blood I burn—
  I'm in love with a tailor's daughter.

XXI.

"'Tis she must heal the wounds that she made,
  'Tis she must be my physician.
O parent mild, stand not my foe—"
For his mother had whisper'd something low
  About "matching beneath his condition."

XXII.

"And then we must get paternal consent,
  Or an unblest match may vex ye."
"Her father is dead; I fetch'd him away,
In the midst of his goose last Michaelmas day—
  He died of an apoplexy.

XXIII.

"His daughter is fair, and an only heir—
  With her I long to tether—
He has left her his *hell*, and all that he had;
The estates are contiguous and, I shall be mad
  'Till we lay our two hells together."

XXIV.

"But how do you know the fair maid's mind?"
  Quoth he, "Her loss was but recent;
And I could not speak *my* mind, you know,
Just when I was fetching her father below—
  It would have been hardly decent.

XXV.

"But a leer from her eye,* where Cupids lie,
  Of love gave proof apparent;
And, from something she dropp'd, I shrewdly ween'd,
In her heart she judged that a *living Fiend*
  Was better than a *dead Parent*.

XXVI.

"But the time is short; and suitors may come
  While I stand here reporting,
Then make your son a bit of a beau,
And give me your blessing before I go
  To the other world a-courting."

XXVII.

"But what will you do with your horns, my son?
  And that tail—fair maids will mock it—"

"My tail I will dock—and as for the horn,
Like husbands above, I think no scorn
To carry it in my pocket."

XXVIII.

"But what will you do with your feet, my son?"
"Here are stockings fairly woven:
My hoofs I will hide in silken hose;
And cinnamon-sweet are my petti-toes—
Because, you know, they are *cloven*."

XXIX.

"Then take a blessing, my darling son,"
Quoth she, and kissed him civil—
Then his neckcloth she tied; and when he was drest
From top to toe in his Sunday's best,
He appear'd a comely devil.

XXX.

So his leave he took: but how he fared
In his courtship—barring failures—
In a Second Part you shall read it soon,
In a brand-new song, to be sung to the tune
Of the "Devil among the Tailors."

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## THE SECOND PART,

### CONTAINING THE COURTSHIP AND THE WEDDING.

I.

WHO is she that by night from her balcony looks
On a garden where cabbage is springing?
'Tis the tailor's fair lass, that we told of above;
She muses by moonlight on her true love;
So sharp is Cupid's stinging.

II.

She has caught a glimpse of the Prince of the Air
In his Luciferian splendour,
And away with coyness and maiden reserve!
For none but the Devil her turn will serve,
Her sorrows else will end her.

III.

She saw when he fetch'd her father away,
And the sight no whit did shake her;
For the Devil may sure with his own make free—
And "it saves besides," quoth merrily she,
"The expense of an undertaker.

IV.

"Then come, my Satan, my darling Sin,
Return to my arms, my Hell beau;
My Prince of Darkness, my crow-black dove—"
And she scarce had spoke, when her own true love
Was kneeling at her elbow!

V.

But she wist not at first that this was he,
That had raised such a boiling passion;
For his old costume he had laid aside,
And was come to court a mortal bride
In a coat-and-waistcoat fashion.

VI.

She miss'd his large horns, and she miss'd his fair tail,
That had hung so retrospective;
And his raven plumes, and some other marks
Regarding his feet, that had left their sparks
In a mind but too susceptive:

VII.

And she held it scorn that a mortal born
Should the Prince of Spirits rival,
To clamber at midnight her garden fence—
For she knew not else by what pretence
To account for his arrival.

VIII.

"What thief art thou," quoth she, "in the dark
That stumblest here presumptuous?

Some Irish adventurer I take you to
be—
A foreigner, from your garb I see,
Which besides is not over sumptuous."

IX.

Then Satan, awhile dissembling his
rank,
A piece of amorous fun tries:
Quoth he, "I'm a Netherlander born;
Fair virgin, receive not my suit with
scorn;
I'm a Prince in the Low Countries—

X.

"Though I travel *incog.* From the
Land of Fog
And Mist I am come to proffer
My crown and my sceptre to lay at
your feet;
It is not every day in the week you
may meet,
Fair maid, with a Prince's offer."

XI.

"Your crown and your sceptre I like
full well,
They tempt a poor maiden's pride,
sir;
But your lands and possessions—excuse if I'm rude—
Are too far in a northerly latitude
For me to become your bride, sir.

XII.

"In that aguish clime I should catch
my death,
Being but a raw new-comer—"
Quoth he, "We have plenty of fuel
stout;
And the fires, which I kindle, never
go out
By winter, nor yet by summer.

XIII.

"I am Prince of Hell, and Lord
Paramount
Over monarchs there abiding.
My groom of the stables is Nimrod
old;
And Nebuchadnazor my stirrups must
hold,
When I go out a-riding.

XIV.

"To spare your blushes, and maiden
fears,
I resorted to these inventions—
But, imposture, begone; and avaunt,
disguise!"
And the Devil began to swell and rise
To his own diabolic dimensions.

XV.

Twin horns from his forehead shot up
to the moon,
Like a branching stag in Arden;
Dusk wings through his shoulders
with eagle's strength
Push'd out; and his train lay floundering in length
An acre beyond the garden.—

XVI.

To tender hearts I have framed my
lay—
Judge ye, all love-sick maidens,
When the virgin saw in the soft moonlight,
In his proper proportions, her own
true knight,
If she needed long persuadings.

XVII.

Yet a maidenly modesty kept her back,
As her sex's art had taught her:
For "the biggest fortunes," quoth
she, "in the land
Are not worthy," then blush'd, "of
your Highness's hand,
Much less a poor tailor's daughter.

XVIII.

"There's the two Miss Crockfords are
single still,
For whom great suitors hunger;
And their father's hell is much larger
than mine."
Quoth the Devil, "I've no such ambitious design,
For their dad is an old fishmonger;

XIX

"And I cannot endure the smell of
fish—
I have taken an anti-bias
To their livers, especially since the day
That the Angel smoked my cousin
away
From the chaste spouse of Tobias.

XX.

"Had my amorous kinsman much longer stay'd,
The perfume would have seal'd his obit;
For he had a nicer nose than the wench,
Who cared not a pin for the smother and stench,
In the arms of the son of Tobit."

XXI.

'I have read it," quoth she, "in Apocryphal Writ—"
And the Devil stoop'd down and kiss'd her;
Not Jove himself, when he courted in flame,
On Semele's lips, the love-scorch'd dame,
Impress'd such a burning blister.

XXII.

The fire through her bones and her vitals shot—
"O, I yield, my winsome marrow—
I am thine for life"—and black thunders roll'd—
And she sank in his arms through the garden mould,
With the speed of a red-hot arrow.

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XXIII.

Merrily, merrily, ring the bells
From each Pandemonian steeple;
For the Devil hath gotten his beautiful bride,
And a wedding dinner he will provide,
To feast all kinds of people.

XXIV.

Fat bulls of Basan are roasted whole,
Of the breed that ran at David;
With the flesh of goats, on the sinister side,
That shall stand apart, when the world is tried;
Fit meat for souls unsavèd!

XXV.

The fowl from the spit were the Harpies' brood,
Which the bard sang near Cremona,
With a garnish of bats in their leathern wings imp'd;
And the fish was—two delicate slices crimp'd,
Of the whale that swallow'd Jonah.

XXVI.

Then the goblets were crown'd, and a health went round
To the bride, in a wine like scarlet;
No earthly vintage so deeply paints,
For 'twas dash'd with a tinge from the blood of the saints
By the Babylonian Harlot.

XXVII.

No Hebe fair stood cup-bearer there,
The guests were their own skinkers;
But Bishop Judas first blest the can,
Who is of all Hell Metropolitan,
And kiss'd it to all the drinkers.

XXVIII.

The feast being ended, to dancing they went,
To music that did produce a
Most dissonant sound, while a hellish glee
Was sung in parts by the Furies Three;
And the Devil took out Medusa.

XXIX.

But the best of the sport was to hear his old dam,
Set up her shrill forlorn pipe—
How the wither'd Beldam hobbled about,
And put the rest of the company out—
For she needs must try a hornpipe.

XXX.

But the heat, and the press, and the noise, and the din,
Were so great, that, howe'er unwilling,
Our reporter no longer was able to stay,
But came in his own defence away,
And left the bride quadrilling.

## THE THREE GRAVES.

[Originally published among the "Poetical Recreations of the Champion," pp. 199–200, these lines, as a note indicated, were "written during the time, now happily almost forgotten, of the Spy System."]

CLOSE by the ever-burning brimstone beds,
Where Bedloe, Oates, and Judas hide their heads,
I saw great Satan like a sexton stand,
With his intolerable spade in hand,
Digging three graves. Of coffin shape they were,
For those who, coffinless, must enter there
With unblest rites. The shrouds were of that cloth
Which Clotho weaveth in her blackest wrath:
The dismal tinct oppress'd the eye, that dwelt
Upon it long, like darkness to be felt.
The pillows to these baleful beds were toads,
Large, living, livid, melancholy loads,
Whose softness shock'd. Worms of all monstrous size
Crawl'd round; and one, upcoil'd, which never dies.
A doleful bell, inculcating despair,
Was always ringing in the heavy air.
And all about the detestable pit
Strange headless ghosts, and quarter'd forms, did flit;
Rivers of blood, from dripping traitors spilt,
By treachery stung from poverty to guilt.
I ask'd the Fiend for whom these rites were meant?
"These graves," quoth he, "when life's brief oil is spent,
When the dark night comes, and they're sinking bedwards,
I mean for Castles, Oliver, and Edwards."

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## TO CHARLES ADERS, ESQ.

ON HIS COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS BY THE OLD GERMAN MASTERS.

(Hone's Year Book, 1831.)

FRIENDLIEST of men, Aders, I never come
Within the precincts of this sacred Room,
But I am struck with a religious fear,
Which says, "Let no profane eye enter here."
With imagery from Heaven the walls are clothed,
Making the things of Time seem vile and loathed.
Spare Saints, whose bodies seem sustain'd by Love,
With Martyrs old in meek procession move.
Here kneels a weeping Magdalen, less bright
To human sense for her blurr'd cheeks; in sight
Of eyes, new touch'd by Heaven, more winning fair
Than when her beauty was her only care.
A Hermit here strange mysteries doth unlock
In desert sole, his knees worn by the rock.
There Angel harps are sounding, while below
Palm-bearing Virgins in white order go.
Madonnas, varied with so chaste design,
While all are different, each seems genuine,
And hers the only Jesus: hard outline
And rigid form, by Dürer's hand subdued
To matchless grace and sacro-sanctitude;
Dürer, who makes thy slighted Germany
Vie with the praise of paint-proud Italy.
Whoever enter'st here, no more presume
To name a Parlour or a Drawing-room;

But, bending lowly to each holy story,
Make this thy Chapel and thine Oratory.

## THE CHANGE.

(Hone's Year Book, 1831.)

[Charles Lamb inscribed these freakish verses "To Louisa M——," adding, "Whom I used to call Monkey."]

LOUISA serious grown and mild,
I knew you once a romping child,
Obstreperous much, and very wild.

Then you would clamber up my knees,
And strive with every art to tease,
When every art of yours could please.

Those things would scarce be proper now,—
But they are gone, I know not how,
And woman's written on your brow.

Time draws his finger o'er the scene;
But I cannot forget between
The thing to me you once have been:

Each sportive sally—wild escape,—
The scoff, the banter, and the jape,—
And antics of my gamesome Ape.

## EXISTENCE, CONSIDERED IN ITSELF, NO BLESSING.

FROM THE LATIN OF PALINGENIUS.

(The *Athenæum*, 7th July, 1832.)

[As originally published in the *Athenæum*, this translation from the Latin of the Italian poet of the sixteenth century, Marcellus Palingenius, *vide Zodiacus Vitæ, lib.* 6, *apud finem*, had prefixed to it this explanatory note: "The poet, after a seeming approval of suicide, from a consideration of the cares and crimes of life, finally rejecting it, discusses the negative importance of existence, contemplated in itself, without reference to good or evil."]

OF these sad truths consideration had—
Thou shalt not fear to quit this world so mad,
So wicked; but the tenets rather hold
Of wise Calanus, and his followers old,
Who with their own wills their own freedom wrought,
And by self-slaughter their dismissal sought
From this dark den of crime—this horrid lair
Of men, that savager than monsters are;
And, scorning longer in this tangled mesh
Of ills, to wait on perishable flesh,
Did with their desperate hands anticipate
The too, too slow relief of lingering fate.
And if religion did not stay thine hand,
And God, and Plato's wise behests, withstand,
I would in like case counsel thee to throw
This senseless burden off, of cares below.
Not wine, *as* wine, men choose, but as it came
From such or such a vintage: 'tis the same
With life, which simply must be understood
A blank negation, if it be not good.
But if 'tis wretched all,—as men decline
And loathe the sour lees of corrupted wine—
'Tis so to be contemn'd. Merely TO BE
Is not a boon to seek, nor ill to flee;
Seeing that every vilest little thing
Has it in common,—from a gnat's small wing,
A creeping worm, down to the moveless stone,
And crumbling bark from trees. Unless TO BE,
And TO BE BLEST, be one, I do not see
In bare existence, *as* existence, aught
That's worthy to be loved or to be sought.

## THE PARTING SPEECH OF THE CELESTIAL MESSENGER TO THE POET.

FROM THE LATIN OF PALINGENIUS.

(The *Athenæum*, 25th February, 1832.)

[Another passage from the same old Italian author's masterpiece.]

BUT now time warns (my mission at an end)
That to Jove's starry court I reascend;
From whose high battlements I take delight
To scan your earth, diminish'd to the sight,
Pendent and round, and as an apple small,
Self-propt, self-balanced, and secure from fall
By her own weight; and how with liquid robe
Blue Ocean girdles round her tiny globe,
While lesser Nereus, gliding like a snake,
Betwixt her lands his flexile course doth take,
Shrunk to a rivulet; and how the Po,
The mighty Ganges, Tanais, Ister, show
No bigger than a ditch which rains have swell'd.
Old Nilus' seven proud mouths I late beheld,
And mock'd the watery puddles. Hosts steel-clad
Ofttimes I thence behold; and how the sad
Peoples are punish'd by the fault of kings,
Which from the purple fiend Ambition springs.
Forgetful of mortality, they live
In hot strife for possessions fugitive,
At which the angels grieve. Sometimes I trace
Of fountains, rivers, seas, the change of place;
By ever-shifting course, and Time's unrest,
The vale exalted, and the mount deprest
To an inglorious valley; ploughshares going
Where tall trees rear'd their tops, and fresh trees growing
In antique pastures. Cities lose their site;
Old things wax new. O what a rare delight
To him, who from this vantage can survey
At once stern Afric and soft Asia,
With Europe's cultured plains, and in their turns
Their scatter'd tribes: those whom the hot Crab burns,
The tawny Ethiops; Orient Indians;
Getulians; ever-wandering Scythians;
Swift Tartar hordes; Cilicians rapacious,
And Parthians with back-bended bow pugnacious;
Sabeans incense-bringing; men of Thrace;
Italian, Spaniard, Gaul; and that rough race
Of Britons, rigid as their native colds;
With all the rest the circling sun beholds!
But clouds, and elemental mists, deny
These visions blest to any fleshly eye.

## HERCULES PACIFICATUS

A TALE FROM SUIDAS.

(The *Englishman's Magazine*, 1831.)

IN days of yore, ere early Greece
Had dream'd of patrols or police,
A crew of rake-hells *in terrorem*
Spread wide, and carried all before 'em;
Rifled the poultry and the women,
And held that all things were in common;
Till Jove's great son the nuisance saw,
And did abate it by club law.
Yet not so clean he made his work,
But here and there a rogue would lurk
In caves and rocky fastnesses,
And shunn'd the strength of Hercules.

Of these, more desperate than others,
A pair of ragamuffin brothers

In secret ambuscade join'd forces,
To carry on unlawful courses.
These robbers' names—enough to shake us—
Were Strymon one, the other Cacus.
And, more the neighbourhood to bother,
A wicked dam they had for mother,
Who knew their craft, but not forbid it;
And whatsoe'er they nimm'd, she hid [it;
Received them with delight and wonder
When they brought home some special plunder;
Call'd them her darlings, and her white boys,
Her ducks, her dildings—all was right, boys—
"Only," she said, "my lads, have care
Ye fall not into BLACK BACK's snare;
For, if he catch, he'll maul your *corpus*,
And clapper-claw you to some purpose."
She was, in truth, a kind of witch;
Had grown by fortune-telling rich;
To spells and conjurings did tackle her,
And read folks' dooms by light oracular,
In which she saw as clear as daylight
What mischief on her bairns would alight:
Therefore she had a special loathing
For all that own'd that sable clothing.

Who can 'scape fate, when we're decreed to't?
The graceless brethren paid small heed to't.
A brace they were of sturdy fellows,
As we may say, that fear'd no colours;
And sneer'd with modern infidelity
At the old gipsy's fond credulity.
It proved all true, though, as she'd mumbled—
For on a day the varlets stumbled
On a green spot—*sit linguæ fides*—
('Tis Suidas tells it), where Alcides,
Secure, as fearing no ill neighbour,
Lay fast asleep after a "Labour."
His trusty oaken plant was near—
The prowling rogues look round and leer,
And each his wicked wits 'gan rub,
How to bear off the famous Club;
Thinking that they *sans* price or hire would
Carry't straight home, and chop for fire-wood:
'Twould serve their old dame half a winter.
You stare; but, 'faith, it was no splinter:
I would not, for much money, spy
Such beam in any neighbour's eye.
The villains, these exploits not dull in,
Incontinently fell a-pulling.
They found it heavy, no slight matter,
But tugg'd and tugg'd it till the clatter
Woke Hercules, who in a trice
Whipp'd up the knaves, and, with a splice
He kept on purpose, which before
Had served for giants many a score—
To end of Club tied each rogue's head fast;
Strapping feet too, to keep them steadfast;
And pickaback them carries townwards,
Behind his brawny back, head-downwards;
(So foolish calf—for rhyme, I bless X—
Comes *nolens volens* out of Essex;)
Thinking to brain them with his *dextra*,
Or string them up upon the next tree.
That Club—so equal fates condemn—
They thought to catch, has now catch'd them.

Now, Hercules, we may suppose,
Was no great dandy in his clothes;
Was seldom, save on Sundays, seen
In calimanco or nankeen;
On anniversaries, would try on
A jerkin spick-span new from lion;
Went bare for the most part, to be cool,
And save the time of his Groom of the Stole.
Besides, the smoke he had been in
In Stygian gulf had dyed his skin
To a natural sable—a right hell-fit,
That seem'd to careless eyes black velvet.

The brethren from their station scurvy,
Where they hung dangling topsy-
turvy,
With horror view the black costume ;
And each presumes his hour is come ;
Then softly to themselves 'gan mutter
The warning words their dame did
utter ;
Yet not so softly, but with ease
Were overheard by Hercules.
Quoth Cacus, "This is he she spoke
of,
Which we so often made a joke of."
"I see," said th' other ; "thank our
sin for 't,
'Tis BLACK BACK, sure enough :
we're in for 't."

His godship, who, for all his brag
Of roughness, was at heart a wag,
At his new name was tickled finely,
And fell a-laughing most divinely ;
Quoth he, "I'll tell this jest in heaven ;
The musty rogues shall be forgiven ;"
So, in a twinkling, did uncase them,
On mother earth once more to place
them.
The varlets, glad to be unhamper'd.
Made each a leg, then fairly scamper'd.

## LINES SUGGESTED BY A SIGHT OF WALTHAM CROSS.

(The *Englishman's Magazine*, September, 1831.)

TIME-mouldering CROSSES, gemm'd
with imagery
Of costliest work, and Gothic tracery,
Point still the spots, to hallow'd wed-
lock dear,
Where rested on its solemn way the
bier,
That bore the bones of Edward's
Elinor
To mix with Royal dust at West-
minster.—
Far different rites did thee to dust
consign,
Duke Brunswick's daughter, princely
Caroline.
A hurrying funeral, and a banish'd
grave,
High-minded wife ! were all that thou
couldst have.
Grieve not, great ghost, nor count in
death thy losses ;
Thou in thy lifetime had'st thy share
of *crosses*.

## THE SELF-ENCHANTED.

(The *Athenæum*, 7th January, 1832.)

I HAD sense in dreams of a beauty
rare,
Whom Fate had spell-bound, and
rooted there,
Stooping, like some enchanted theme,
Over the marge of that crystal stream,
Where the blooming Greek, to Echo
blind,
With self-love fond, had to waters
pined.
Ages had waked, and ages slept,
And that bending posture still she kept :
For her eyes she may not turn away,
Till a fairer object shall pass that
way—
Till an image more beauteous this
world can show,
Than her own which she sees in the
mirror below.

Pore on, fair creature ! for ever pore,
Nor dream to be disenchanted more ;
For vain is expectance, and wish is
vain,
Till a new Narcissus can come again.

## TO A FRIEND, ON HIS MARRIAGE.

(The *Athenæum*, 7th December, 1833.)

WHAT makes a happy wedlock ?
What has fate
Not given to thee in thy well-chosen
mate ?
Good sense—good humour ;—these
are trivial things,
Dear M—, that each trite encomiast
sings.
But she hath these, and more. A mind
exempt
From every low-bred passion, where
contempt,

Nor envy, nor detraction, ever found
A harbour yet; an understanding sound;
Just views of right and wrong; perception full
Of the deform'd, and of the beautiful,
In life and manners; wit above her sex,
Which, as a gem, her sprightly converse decks;
Exuberant fancies, prodigal of mirth,
To gladden woodland walk, or winter hearth;
A noble nature, conqueror in the strife
Of conflict with a hard discouraging life,
Strengthening the veins of virtue, past the power
Of those whose days have been one silken hour,
Spoil'd fortune's pamper'd offspring; a keen sense
Alike of benefit, and of offence.
With reconcilement quick, that instant springs
From the charged heart with nimble angel wings;
While grateful feelings, like a signet sign'd
By a strong hand, seem burnt into her mind.
If these, dear friend, a dowry can confer
Richer than land, thou hast them all in her;
And beauty, which some hold the chiefest boon,
Is in thy bargain for a make-weight thrown.

## TO THOMAS STOTHARD, R.A.,

ON HIS ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE POEMS OF MR. ROGERS.

(The *Athenæum*, 21st December, 1833.)

CONSUMMATE Artist, whose undying name
With classic Rogers' shall go down to fame,
Be this thy crowning work! In my young days
How often have I with a child's fond gaze
Pored on the pictured wonders thou hadst done:
Clarissa mournful, and prim Grandison!
All Fielding's, Smollett's heroes, rose to view;
I saw, and I believed the phantoms true.
But, above all, that most romantic tale
Did o'er my raw credulity prevail,
Where Glums and Gawries wear mysterious things,
That serve at once for jackets and for wings.
Age, that enfeebles other men's designs,
But heightens thine, and thy free draught refines.
In several ways distinct you make us feel—
*Graceful* as Raphael, as Watteau *genteel.*
Your lights and shades, as Titianesque, we praise;
And warmly wish you Titian's length of days.

## TO CLARA N[OVELLO].

(The *Athenæum*, 26th July, 1834.)

THE Gods have made me most unmusical,
With feelings that respond not to the call
Of stringèd harp or voice—obtuse and mute
To hautboy, sackbut, dulcimer, and flute;
King David's lyre, that made the madness flee
From Saul, had been but a jew's-harp to me:
Theorbos, violins, French horns, guitars,
Leave in my wounded ears inflicted scars;
I hate those trills, and shakes, and sounds that float
Upon the captive air; I know no note,
Nor ever shall, whatever folks may say,
Of the strange mysteries of *Sol* and *Fa*;
I sit at oratorios like a fish,
Incapable of sound, and only wish

The thing was over. Yet do I admire,
O tuneful daughter of a tuneful sire,
Thy painful labours in a science, which
To your deserts I pray may make you rich
As much as you are loved, and add a grace
To the most musical Novello race.
Women lead men by the nose, some cynics say;
You draw them by the ear—a delicater way.

## HYPOCHONDRIACUS.

[Originally published in 1802 (among the Miscellaneous Pieces appended to Charles Lamb's Five Act Tragedy of *John Woodvil*) as part and parcel of what purported to be "Curious Fragments from a Common-place Book which belonged to Robert Burton, author of The Anatomy of Melancholy."]

By myself walking,
To myself talking,
When as I ruminate
On my untoward fate,
Scarce seem I
Alone sufficiently,
Black thoughts continually
Crowding my privacy;
They come unbidden,
Like foes at a wedding,
Thrusting their faces
In better guests' places,
Peevish and malecontent,
Clownish, impertinent,
Dashing the merriment:
So in like fashions
Dim cogitations
Follow and haunt me,
Striving to daunt me,
In my heart festering,
In my ears whispering,
"Thy friends are treacherous,
Thy foes are dangerous,
Thy dreams ominous."

Fierce Anthropophagi,
Spectra, Diaboli,
What scared St. Anthony,
Hobgoblins, Lemures,
Dreams of Antipodes,
Night-riding Incubi
Troubling the fantasy,
All dire illusions
Causing confusions;
Figments heretical,
Scruples fantastical,
Doubts diabolical;
Abaddon vexeth me,
Mahu perplexeth me,
Lucifer teaseth me—
*Jesu! Maria! liberate nos ab his diris tentationibus Inimici.*

## FREE THOUGHTS ON SEVERAL EMINENT COMPOSERS.

Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart,
Just as the whim bites; for my part,
I do not care a farthing candle
For either of them, or for Handel.—
Cannot a man live free and easy,
Without admiring Pergolesé?
Or through the world with comfort go
That never heard of Doctor Blow?
So help me Heaven, I hardly have;
And yet I eat, and drink, and shave,
Like other people, if you watch it,
And know no more of stave or crotchet
Than did the primitive Peruvians;
Or those old ante-queer-diluvians
That lived in the unwash'd world with Jubal,
Before that dirty blacksmith Tubal,
By stroke on anvil, or by summat,
Found out, to his great surprise, the gamut.
I care no more for Cimarosa
Than he did for Salvator Rosa,
Being no painter; and bad luck
Be mine, if I can bear that Gluck!
Old Tycho Brahe, and modern Herschel,
Had something in them; but who's Purcel?
The devil with his foot so cloven,
For aught I care, may take Beethoven;
And, if the bargain does not suit,
I'll throw him Weber in to boot!
There's not the splitting of a splinter
To choose 'twixt him last named, and Winter.
Of Doctor Pepusch old Queen Dido
Knew just as much, God knows, as I do.
I would not go four miles to visit
Sebastian Bach, (or Batch, which is it?)

No more I would for Bononcini.
As for Novello, or Rossini,
I shall not say a word to grieve 'em,
Because they're living; so I leave 'em.

## WHAT IS AN ALBUM?

[A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* brought to light the following verses, which he discovered by accident, written on the fly-leaf of a copy of "John Woodvil," lying for sale in a bookseller's window-stall, the lines being dated the 7th September, 1830, penned unmistakably in Charles Lamb's handwriting, and further authenticated with his simple straggling autograph.]

'Tis a book kept by modern young ladies for show,
Of which their plain grandmothers nothing did know;
A medley of scraps, half verse and half prose,
And some things not very like either, God knows.
The first soft effusions of beaux and of belles,
Of future Lord Byrons and sweet L. E. L.'s;
Where wise folk and simple both equally join,
And you write your nonsense that I may write mine.
Stick in a fine landscape to make a display—
A flower-piece, a foreground! all tinted so gay,
As Nature herself, could she see them, would strike
With envy, to think that she ne'er did the like;
And since some Lavaters, with head-pieces comical,
Have agreed to pronounce people's hands physiognomical,
Be sure that you stuff it with autographs plenty,
All penn'd in a fashion so stiff and so dainty,
They no more resemble folks' ordinary writing
Than lines penn'd with pains do extempore writing,
Or our every-day countenance (pardon the stricture)
The faces we make when we sit for our picture:
Then have you, Madelina, an album complete,
Which may *you* live to finish, and I live to see 't!

## TO MARGARET W——.

(*The Athenæum*, 14th March, 1835).

[Written at Edmonton, on the 8th October, 1834, only eleven weeks before Charles Lamb's death, and first published in the *Athenæum*, within less than three months after he was laid in his grave.]

Margaret, in happy hour
Christen'd from that humble flower
Which we a daisy call!
May thy pretty namesake be
In all things a type of thee,
And image thee in all.

Like *it* you show a modest face,
An unpretending native grace;—
The tulip, and the pink,
The china and the damask rose,
And every flaunting flower that blows,
In the comparing shrink.

Of lowly fields you think no scorn;
Yet gayest gardens would adorn,
And grace, wherever set.
Home-seated in your lonely bower,
Or wedded—a transplanted flower—
I bless you, Margaret!

## PROLOGUE

### TO COLERIDGE'S TRAGEDY OF "REMORSE."

[Spoken by Mr. Carr, on Saturday, the 23rd January, 1813, when the play was first produced on the boards of Drury Lane Theatre. In the original issue of the drama, in its printed form, this prologue was duly published.]

There are, I am told, who sharply criticize
Our modern theatres' unwieldy size.
We players shall scarce plead guilty to that charge,
Who think a house can never be too large:
Grieved when a rant, that's worth a nation's ear,
Shakes some prescribed Lyceum's petty sphere;

And pleased to mark the grin from space to space
Spread epidemic o'er a town's broad face.
O might old Betterton or Booth return
To view our structures from their silent urn,
Could Quin come stalking from Elysian glades,
Or Garrick get a day-rule from the shades,
Where now, perhaps, in mirth which spirits approve,
He imitates the ways of men above,
And apes the actions of our upper coast,
As in his days of flesh he play'd the ghost:
How might they bless our ampler scope to please,
And hate their own old shrunk-up audiences.
Their houses yet were palaces to those
Which Ben and Fletcher for their triumphs chose.
Shakespeare, who wish'd a kingdom for a stage,
Like giant pent in disproportion'd cage,
Mourn'd his contracted strengths and crippled rage.
He who could tame his vast ambition down
To please some scatter'd gleanings of a town,
And if some hundred auditors supplied
Their meagre meed of claps, was satisfied,
How had he felt, when that dread curse of Lear's
Had burst tremendous on a thousand ears,
While deep struck wonder from applauding bands
Return'd the tribute of as many hands!
Rude were his guests; he never made his bow
To such an audience as salutes us now.
He lack'd the balm of labour, female praise.
Few ladies in his time frequented plays,
Or came to see a youth with awkward art
And shrill sharp pipe burlesque the woman's part.
The very use, since so essential grown,
Of painted scenes, was to his stage unknown.
The air-blest castle, round whose wholesome crest,
The martlet, guest of summer, chose her nest—
The forest walks of Arden's fair domain,
Where Jaques fed his solitary vein,—
No pencil's aid as yet had dared supply,
Seen only by the intellectual eye.
Those scenic helps, denied to Shakespeare's page,
Our Author owes to a more liberal age.
Nor pomp nor circumstance are wanting here;
'Tis for himself alone that he must fear.
Yet shall remembrance cherish the just pride,
That (be the laurel granted or denied)
He first essay'd in this distinguish'd fane
Severer muses and a tragic strain.

## EPILOGUE

TO "THE WIFE: A TALE OF MANTUA," BY JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

[Spoken by Miss Ellen Tree, afterwards Mrs. Charles Kean, on the night of the drama's first representation. In the printed copy of the play published immediately afterwards, the dramatist, in his Preface, dated 24th April, 1833, took occasion to say: "To my early, my trusty and honoured friend, Charles Lamb, I owe my thanks for a delightful Epilogue, composed almost as soon as it was requested."]

When first our bard his simple will express'd
That I should in his heroine's robes be dress'd,
My fears were with my vanity at strife,
How I could act that untried part—"a wife."

But Fancy to the Grison hills me drew
Where Mariana like a wild-flower grew,
Nursing her garden-kindred: so far I
Liked her condition, willing to comply
With that sweet single life: when, with a cranch,
Down came that thundering, crashing avalanche,
Starting my mountain-project! "Take this spade,"
Said Fancy then, "dig low, adventurous maid,
For hidden wealth." I did; and ladies, lo!
Was e'er romantic female's fortune so,
To dig a life-warm lover from the snow?

A wife and princess see me next, beset
With subtle toils, in an Italian net,
While knavish courtiers, stung with rage or fear,
Distill'd lip-poison in a husband's ear.
I ponder'd on the boiling southern vein;
Racks, cords, stilettoes, rush'd upon my brain!
By poor, good, weak Antonio, too, disownèd—
I dream'd each night I should be Desdemona'd,
And, being in Mantua, thought upon the shop
Whence fair Verona's youth his breath did stop:
And what if Leonardo, in foul scorn,
Some lean apothecary should suborn
To take my hated life? A "tortoise" hung
Before my eyes, and in my ears scaled "alligators rung."
But *my* Othello, to his vows more zealous—
Twenty Iagos could not make *him* jealous!

New raised to reputation, and to life—
At your commands behold me, without strife,
Well-pleased, and ready to repeat—the "Wife."

# Dramatic Works.

## John Woodvil:

### A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

[Originally published in 1802, as a volume of 128 pages duodecimo, by G. and I. Robinson, of Paternoster Row, *John Woodvil* occupied the first 104 pages, the remaining 24 pages comprising several curious fragments. There, for example, was given Thekla's "Balad" (*sic* with one l), translated from the German. The original title of the volume sufficiently explained the nature of its contents, however, as follows: "*John Woodvil*, a Tragedy by C. Lamb; to which are added fragments of Burton, the author of The Anatomy of Melancholy." These Fragments, as a matter of course, were about as truly Burton's as Walter Savage Landor's Imaginary Conversations were the actual utterances of the interlocutors. Imbedded among them, like a vein of pure gold in a lump of sparkling quartz, was his quaint and eminently characteristic poem of "Hypochondriacus."]

CHARACTERS.

SIR WALTER WOODVIL.
JOHN, } *his sons.*
SIMON, }
LOVEL, } *pretended friends of John.*
GRAY, }
SANDFORD, *Sir Walter's old Steward.*
MARGARET, *Orphan Ward of Sir Walter.*
FOUR GENTLEMEN, *John's riotous companions.*
SERVANTS.

SCENE.—*For the most part at Sir Walter's mansion in Devonshire; at other times in the forest of Sherwood.*
TIME.—*Soon after the Restoration.*

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE.—*A Servants' Apartment in Woodvil Hall.*

*Servants drinking.—Time, the Morning.*

*A Song by* DANIEL.

"When the King enjoys his own again."

*Peter.* A delicate song. Where didst learn it, fellow?

*Daniel.* Even there, where thou learnest thy oaths and thy politics—at our master's table. Where else should a serving-man pick up his poor accomplishments?

*Martin.* Well spoken, Daniel. O rare Daniel!—his oaths and his politics! excellent!

*Francis.* And where didst pick up thy knavery, Daniel?

*Pet.* That came to him by inheritance. His family have supplied the shire of Devon, time out of mind, with good thieves, and bad serving-men. All of his race have come into the world without their conscience.

*Mar.* Good thieves, and bad serving-men? Better and better. I marvel what Daniel hath got to say in reply.

*Dan.* I marvel more when thou wilt say anything to the purpose, thou shallow serving-man, whose swiftest conceit carries thee no higher than to apprehend with difficulty the stale jests of us thy compeers. When wast ever known to club thy own particular jest among us?

*Mar.* Most unkind Daniel, to speak such biting things of me!

*Fran.* See—if he hath not brought tears into the poor fellow's eyes with the saltness of his rebuke.

*Dan.* No offence, brother Martin—I meant none. 'Tis true, Heaven gives gifts, and withholds them. It has been pleased to bestow upon me a nimble invention to the manufacture of a jest; and upon thee, Martin, an indifferent bad capacity to understand my meaning.

*Mar.* Is that all? I am content. Here's my hand.

*Fran.* Well, I like a little innocent mirth myself, but never could endure bawdry.

*Dan.* *Quot homines tot sententiæ.*

*Mar.* And what is that?

*Dan.* 'Tis Greek, and argues difference of opinion.

*Mar.* I hope there is none between us.

*Dan.* Here's to thee, brother Martin (*drinks*).

*Mar.* And to thee, Daniel (*drinks*).

*Fran.* And to thee, Peter (*drinks*).

*Pet.* Thank you, Francis. And here's to thee (*drinks*).

*Mar.* I shall be fuddled anon.

*Dan.* And drunkenness I hold to be a very despicable vice.

*All.* O! a shocking vice. [*They drink round.*

*Pet.* Inasmuch as it taketh away the understanding.

*Dan.* And makes the eyes red.

*Pet.* And the tongue to stammer.

*Dan.* And to blab out secrets.

(*During this conversation they continue drinking.*)

*Pet.* Some men don't know an enemy from a friend, when they are drunk.

*Dan.* Certainly sobriety is the health of the soul.

*Mar.* Now I know I am going to be drunk.

*Dan.* How canst tell, dry-bones?

*Mar.* Because I begin to be melancholy. That's always a sign.

*Fran.* Take care of Martin, he'll topple off his seat else.

[MARTIN *drops asleep.*

*Pet.* Times are greatly altered since young master took upon himself the government of this household.

*All.* Greatly altered.

*Fran.* I think everything be altered for the better since his Majesty's blessed restoration.

*Pet.* In Sir Walter's days there was no encouragement given to good house-keeping.

*All.* None.

*Dan.* For instance, no possibility of getting drunk before two in the afternoon.

*Pet.* Every man his allowance of ale at breakfast—his quart!

*All.* A quart! ! (*in derision*).

*Dan.* Nothing left to our own sweet discretions.

*Pet.* Whereby it may appear, we were treated more like beasts, than what we were—discreet and reasonable serving-men.

*All.* Like beasts.

*Mar.* (*opening his eyes*). Like beasts!

*Dan.* To sleep, wag-tail!

*Fran.* I marvel all this while, where the old gentleman has found means to secrete himself. It seems, no man has heard of him since the day of the King's return. Can any tell, why our young master, being favoured by the court, should not have interest to procure his father's pardon?

*Dan.* Marry, I think 'tis the obstinacy of the old Knight, that will not be beholden to the court for his safety.

*Mar.* Now that is wilful.

*Fran.* But can any tell me the place of his concealment?

*Pet.* That cannot I; but I have my conjectures.

*Dan.* Two hundred pounds, as I hear, to the man that shall apprehend him.

*Fran.* Well, I have my suspicions.

*Pet.* And so have I.

*Mar.* And I can keep a secret.

*Fran.* (*to* PETER). Warwickshire you mean (*aside*).

*Pet.* Perhaps not.

*Fran.* Nearer perhaps.

*Pet.* I say nothing.

*Dan.* I hope there is none in this company would be mean enough to betray him.

*All.* O Lord, surely not. [*They drink to* SIR WALTER'S *safety.*

*Fran.* I have often wondered, how our master came to be excepted by name in the late Act of Oblivion.

*Dan.* Shall I tell the reason?

*All.* Ay, do.

*Dan.* 'Tis thought, he is no great friend to the present happy establishment.

*All.* O! monstrous!

*Pet.* Fellow-servants, a thought strikes me. Do we, or do we not, come under the penalties of the treason act, by reason of our being privy to this man's concealment!

*All.* Truly, a sad consideration.

*To them enters* SANDFORD *suddenly.*

*Sandford.* You well-fed and unprofitable grooms,
Maintain'd for state, not use;
You lazy feasters at another's cost,
That eat like maggots into an estate,
And do as little work,
Being indeed but foul excrescences,
And no just parts in a well-order'd family;
You base and rascal imitators,
Who act up to the height your master's vices,
But cannot read his virtues in your bond:
Which of you, as I enter'd, spake of betraying?
Was it you, or you, or, thin-face, was it you?

*Mar.* Whom does he call thin-face?

*Sand.* No prating, loon, but tell me who he was,
That I may brain the villain with my staff,
That seeks Sir Walter's life!

You miserable men,
With minds more slavish than your slave's estate,
Have you that noble bounty so forgot,
Which took you from the looms, and from the ploughs,
Which better had ye follow'd, fed ye, clothed ye,
And entertain'd ye in a worthy service,
Where your best wages was the world's repute,
That thus ye seek his life, by whom ye live?
Have you forgot too,
How often in old times
Your drunken mirths have stunn'd day's sober ears,
Carousing full cups to Sir Walter's health?
Whom now ye would betray, but that he lies
Out of the reach of your poor treacheries.
This learn from me,
Our master's secret sleeps with trustier tongues,
Than will unlock themselves to carles like you.
Go, get you gone, you knaves. Who stirs? this staff
Shall teach you manners else.

*All.* Well, we are going.

*Sand.* And quickly too, ye had better, for I see
Young mistress Margaret coming this way.

[*Exeunt all but* SANDFORD.

*Enter* MARGARET, *as in a fright, pursued by a Gentleman, who, seeing* SANDFORD, *retires muttering a curse.*

SANDFORD. MARGARET.

*Sand.* Good-morrow to my fair mistress. 'Twas a chance
I saw you, lady, so intent was I
On chiding hence these graceless serving-men,
Who cannot break their fast at morning meals
Without debauch and mis-timed riotings.
This house hath been a scene of nothing else,
But atheist riot and profane excess,
Since my old master quitted all his rights here.

*Marg.* Each day I endure fresh insult from the scorn
Of Woodvil's friends, the uncivil jests
And free discourses of the dissolute men,
That haunt this mansion, making me their mirth.

*Sand.* Does my young master know of these affronts?

*Marg.* I cannot tell. Perhaps he has not been told.
Perhaps he might have seen them if he would.
I have known him more quick-sighted. Let that pass.
All things seem changed, I think. I had a friend,
(I can't but weep to think him alter'd too)
These things are best forgotten: but I knew
A man, a young man, young, and full of honour,
That would have pick'd a quarrel for a straw,
And fought it out to the extremity,
E'en with the dearest friend he had alive,
On but a bare surmise, a possibility,
That Margaret had suffer'd an affront.
Some are too tame that were too splenetic once.

*Sand.* 'Twere best he should be *told* of these affronts.

*Marg.* I am the daughter of his father's friend,
Sir Walter's orphan ward.
I am not his servant-maid, that I should wait
The opportunity of a gracious hearing,
Inquire the times and seasons when to put
My peevish prayer up at young Woodvil's feet,
And sue to him for slow redress, who was
Himself a suitor late to Margaret.
I am somewhat proud : and Woodvil taught me pride.
I was his favourite once, his playfellow in infancy,
And joyful mistress of his youth.
None once so pleasant in his eyes as Margaret.
His conscience, his religion, Margaret was,
His dear heart's confessor, a heart within that heart,
And all dear things summ'd up in her alone.
As Margaret smiled or frown'd John lived or died:
His dress, speech, gesture, studies, friendships, all
Being fashion'd to her liking.
His flatteries taught me first this self-esteem,
His flatteries and caresses, while he loved,
The world esteem'd her happy, who had won
His heart, who won all hearts;
And ladies envied me the love of Woodvil.
*Sand.* He doth affect the courtier's life too much,
Whose art is to forget,
And that has wrought this seeming change in him,
That was by nature noble.
'Tis these court plagues, that swarm about our house,
Have done the mischief, making his fancy giddy
With images of state preferment, place,
Tainting his generous spirits with ambition.
*Marg.* I know not how it is;
A cold protector is John grown to me.
The mistress and presumptive wife of Woodvil
Can never stoop so low to supplicate
A man, her equal, to redress those wrongs,
Which he was bound first to prevent:
But which his own neglects have sanction'd rather,
Both sanction'd and provoked; a mark'd neglect,
And strangeness fastening bitter on his love,
His love which long has been upon the wane.
For me, I am determined what to do:
To leave this house this night, and lukewarm John.
*Sand.* O lady, have a care
Of these indefinite and spleen-bred resolves.
You know not half the dangers that attend
Upon a life of wandering, which your thoughts now
Feeling the swellings of a lofty anger,
To your abusèd fancy, as 'tis likely,
Portray without its terrors, painting *lies*
And representments of fallacious liberty—
You know not what it is to leave the roof that shelters you.
*Marg.* I have thought on every possible event,
The dangers and discouragements you speak of,
Even till my woman's heart hath ceased to fear them,
And cowardice grows enamour'd of rare accidents,

Nor am I so unfurnish'd as you think,
Of practicable schemes.
*Sand.* Now God forbid; think twice of this, dear lady.
*Marg.* I pray you spare me, Mr. Sandford,
And once for all believe, nothing can shake my purpose.
*Sand.* But what course have you thought on?
*Marg.* To seek Sir Walter in the forest of Sherwood.
I have letters from young Simon,
Acquainting me with all the circumstances
Of their concealment, place, and manner of life,
And the merry hours they spend in the green haunts
Of Sherwood, nigh which place they have ta'en a house
In the town of Nottingham, and pass for foreigners,
Wearing the dress of Frenchmen.—
All which I have perused with so attent
And child-like longings, that to my doting ears
Two sounds now seem like one,
One meaning in two words, Sherwood and Liberty.—
And, gentle Mr. Sandford,—
'Tis you that must provide now
The means of my departure, which for safety
Must be in boy's apparel.
*Sand.* Since you will have it so
(My careful age trembles at all may happen)
I will engage to furnish you.
I have the keys of the wardrobe, and can fit you
With garments to your size.
I know a suit
Of lively Lincoln Green, that shall much grace you
In the wear, being glossy fresh, and worn but seldom.
Young Stephen Woodvil wore them while he lived.
I have the keys of all this house and passages,
And ere day break will rise and let you forth.
What things soe'er you have need of I can furnish you;
And will provide a horse and trusty guide
To bear you on your way to Nottingham.—
*Marg.* That once this day and night were fairly past!
For then I'll bid this house and love farewell;
Farewell, sweet Devon; farewell, lukewarm John:
For with the morning's light will Margaret be gone.
Thanks, courteous Mr. Sandford.— [*Exeunt divers ways.*

## ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE.—*An Apartment in Woodvil Hall.*

JOHN WOODVIL—*alone.*

(*Reading parts of a Letter.*)

The Letter.

"When Love grows cold, and indifference has usurped upon old esteem, it is no marvel if the world begin to account *that* dependence, which hitherto has been esteemed honourable shelter. The course I have taken (in leaving this

house, not easily wrought thereunto) seemed to me best for the once-for-all releasing of yourself (who in times past have deserved well of me) from the now daily and not to be endured tribute of forced love, and ill-dissembled reluctance of affection.

(Signed) "MARGARET."

Gone! gone! my girl? so hasty, Margaret!
And never a kiss at parting? shallow loves,
And likings of a ten days' growth, use courtesies,
And show red eyes at parting. Who bids "farewell"
In the same tone he cries "God speed you, sir?"
Or tells of joyful victories at sea,
Where he hath ventures? does not rather muffle
His organs to emit a leaden sound,
To suit the melancholy dull "farewell,"
Which They in Heaven not use?—
So peevish, Margaret?
But 'tis the common error of your sex,
When our idolatry slackens, or grows less,
(As who of woman born can keep his faculty,
Of Admiration, being a decaying faculty,
For ever strain'd to the pitch? or can at pleasure
Make it renewable, as some appetites are,
As namely, Hungry, Thirst?) – this being the case,
They tax us with neglect, and love grown cold,
Coin plainings of the perfidy of men,
Which into maxims pass, and apothegms
To be retail'd in ballads.—
I know them all.
They are jealous, when our larger hearts receive
More guests than one. (Love in a woman's heart
Being all in one). For me, I am sure I have room here
For more disturbers of my sleep than one.
Love shall have part, but Love shall not have all.
Ambition, Pleasure, Vanity, all by turns,
Shall lie in my bed, and keep me fresh and waking;
Yet Love not be excluded. Foolish wench,
I could have loved her twenty years to come,
And still have kept my liking. But since 'tis so,
Why, fare thee well, old play-fellow! I'll try
To squeeze a tear for old acquaintance' sake.
I shall not grudge so much.——

*To him enter* LOVEL.

*Lov.* Bless us, Woodvil! what is the matter? I protest, man, I thought you had been weeping.

*Wood.* Nothing is the matter, only the wench has forced some water into my eyes, which will quickly disband.

*Lov.* I cannot conceive you.

*Wood.* Margaret is flown.

*Lov.* Upon what pretence?

*Wood.* Neglect on my part: which it seems she has had the wit to discover, maugre all my pains to conceal it.

*Lov.* Then you confess the charge?

*Wood.* To say the truth, my love for her has of late stopped short on this side idolatry.

*Lov.* As all good Christians should, I think.

*Wood.* I am sure, I could have loved her still within the limits of warrantable love.

*Lov.* A kind of brotherly affection, I take it.

*Wood.* We should have made excellent man and wife in time.

*Lov.* A good old couple, when the snows fell, to crowd about a sea-coal fire, and talk over old matters.

*Wood.* While each should feel, what neither cared to acknowledge, that stories oft repeated may at last come to lose some of their grace by the repetition.

*Lov.* Which both of you may yet live long enough to discover. For, take my word for it, Margaret is a bird, that will come back to you without a lure.

*Wood.* Never, never, Lovel. Spite of my levity, with tears I confess it, she was a lady of most confirmed honour, of an unmatchable spirit, and determinate in all virtuous resolutions; not hasty to anticipate an affront, nor slow to feel, where just provocation was given.

*Lov.* What made you neglect her then?

*Wood.* Mere levity and youthfulness of blood, a malady incident to young men, physicians call it caprice. Nothing else. He that slighted her, knew her value: and 'tis odds, but for thy sake, Margaret, John will yet go to his grave a bachelor. [*A noise heard as of one drunk and singing.*

*Lov.* Here comes one, that will quickly dissipate these humours.

*Enter one drunk.*

*Drunken Man.* Good-morrow to you, gentlemen. Mr. Lovel, I am your humble servant. Honest Jack Woodvil, I will get drunk with you to-morrow.

*Wood.* And why to-morrow, honest Mr. Freeman?

*Drunk. M.* I scent a traitor in that question. A beastly question. Is it not his Majesty's birth-day? the day of all days in the year, on which King Charles the Second was graciously pleased to be born. (*Sings*) "Great pity 'tis such days as those should come but once a year."

*Lov.* Drunk in a morning! foh! how he stinks.

*Drunk. M.* And why not drunk in a morning? canst tell, bully?

*Wood.* Because being the sweet and tender infancy of the day, methinks it should ill-endure such early blightings.

*Drunk. M.* I grant you, 'tis in some sort the youth and tender nonage of the day. Youth is bashful, and I give it a cup to encourage it. (*Sings*) "Ale that will make Grimalkin prate."—At noon I drink for thirst, at night for fellowship, but above all I love to usher in the bashful morning under the auspices of a freshening stoup of liquor. (*Sings*) "Ale in a Saxon rumkin then Makes valour burgeon in tall men."—But I crave pardon. I fear I keep that gentleman from serious thoughts. There be those that wait for me in the cellar.

*Wood.* Who are they?

*Drunk. M.* Gentlemen, my good friends, Cleveland, Delaval, and Truby. I know by this time they are all clamorous for me. [*Exit singing.*

*Wood.* This keepnig of open house acquaints a man with strange companions.

*Enter, at another door, Three calling for* HARRY FREEMAN.

Harry Freeman, Harry Freeman.
He is not here. Let us go look for him.
Where is Freeman?
Where is Harry? [*Exeunt the Three, calling for* FREEMAN.

*Wood.* Did you ever see such gentry? (*laughing*). These are they, that

fatten on ale and tobacco in a morning, drink burnt brandy at noon to promote digestion, and piously conclude with quart bumpers after supper to prove their loyalty.

*Lov.* Come, shall we adjourn to the Tennis Court?

*Wood.* No, you shall go with me into the gallery, where I will show you the *Vandyke* I have purchased: "The late king taking leave of his children."

*Lov.* I will but adjust my tress, and attend you. [*Exit* LOVEL.

*Wood.* (*alone*). Now universal England getteth drunk
For joy that Charles, her monarch, is restored:
And she, that sometime wore a saintly mask,
The stale-grown vizor from her face doth pluck,
And weareth now a suit of morris bells,
With which she jingling goes through all her towns and villages.
The baffled factions in their houses skulk:
The commonwealthsman, and state machinist,
The cropp'd fanatic, and fifth-monarchy-man,
Who heareth of these visionaries now?
They and their dreams have ended. Fools do sing,
Where good men yield God thanks; but politic spirits,
Who live by observation, note these changes
Of the popular mind, and thereby serve their ends.
Then why not I? What's Charles to me, or Oliver,
But as my own advancement hangs on one of them?
I to my myself am chief.——I know,
Some shallow mouths cry out, that I am smit
With the gauds and show of state, the point of place,
And trick of precedence, the ducks, and nods,
Which weak minds pay to rank. 'Tis not to sit
In place of worship at the royal masques,
Their pastimes, plays, and Whitehall banquetings,
For none of these,
Nor yet to be seen whispering with some great one,
Do I affect the favours of the court.
I would be great, for greatness hath great *power*,
And that's the fruit I reach at.—
Great spirits ask great play-room. Who could sit,
With these prophetic swellings in my breast,
That prick and goad me on, and never cease,
To the fortunes something tells me I was born to?
Who, with such monitors within to stir him,
Would sit him down with lazy arms across,
An unit, a thing without a name in the state,
A something to be govern'd, not to govern,
A fishing, hawking, hunting, country gentleman? [*Exit.*

SCENE.—*Sherwood Forest.*

SIR WALTER WOODVIL, SIMON WOODVIL (*disguised as Frenchmen*).

*Sir Wal.* How fares my boy, Simon, my youngest born,
My hope, my pride, young Woodvil, speak to me?
Some grief untold weighs heavy at thy heart:
I know it by thy alter'd cheer of late.
Thinkest thy brother plays thy father false?
It is a mad and thriftless prodigal,
Grown proud upon the favours of the court;

Court manners, and court fashions, he affects,
And in the heat and uncheck'd blood of youth,
Harbours a company of riotous men,
All hot, and young, court-seekers like himself,
Most skilful to devour a patrimony;
And these have eat into my old estates,
And these have drain'd thy father's cellars dry;
But these so common faults of youth not named,
(Things which themselves outgrow, left to themselves)
I know no quality that stains his honour.
My life upon his faith and noble mind,
Son John could never play thy father false.

*Sim.* I never thought but nobly of my brother,
Touching his honour and fidelity,
Still I could wish him charier of his person,
And of his time more frugal, than to spend
In riotous living, graceless society,
And mirth unpalatable, hours better employ'd
(With those persuasive graces nature lent him)
In fervent pleadings for a father's life.

*Sir Wal.* I would not owe my life to a jealous court,
Whose shallow policy I know it is,
On some reluctant acts of prudent mercy,
(Not voluntary, but extorted by the times,
In the first tremblings of new-fixed power,
And recollection smarting from old wounds,)
On these to build a spurious popularity.
Unknowing what free grace or mercy mean,
They fear to punish, therefore do they pardon.
For this cause have I oft forbid my son,
By letters, overtures, open solicitings,
Or closet-tamperings, by gold or fee,
To beg or bargain with the court for my life.

*Sim.* And John has ta'en you, father, at your word,
True to the letter of his paternal charge.

*Sir Wal.* Well, my good cause, and my good conscience, boy,
Shall be for sons to me, if John prove false.
Men die but once, and the opportunity
Of a noble death is not an every-day fortune:
It is a gift which noble spirits pray for.

*Sim.* I would not wrong my brother by surmise;
I know him generous, full of gentle qualities,
Incapable of base compliances,
No prodigal in his nature, but affecting
The show of bravery for ambitious ends.
He drinks, for 'tis the humour of the court,
And drink may one day wrest the secret from him,
And pluck you from your hiding place in the sequel.

*Sir Wal.* Fair death shall be my doom, and foul life is.
Till when, we'll live as free in this green forest,
As yonder deer, who roam unfearing treason;
Who seem the Aborigines of this place,
Of Sherwood theirs by tenure.—

*Sim.* 'Tis said, that Robert Earl of Huntingdon,
Men call'd him Robin Hood, an outlaw bold,
With a merry crew of hunters here did haunt,

Not sparing the king's vension. May one believe
The antique tale?
*Sir Wal.* There is much likelihood,
Such bandits did in England erst abound,
When polity was young. I have read of the pranks
Of that mad archer, and of the tax he levied
On travellers, whatever their degree,
Baron, or Knight, whoever pass'd these woods,
Layman, or Priest, not sparing the Bishop's mitre
For spiritual regards; nay once, 'tis said,
He robb'd the King himself.
*Sim.* A perilous man (*smiling*).
*Sir Wal.* How quietly we live here,
Unread in the world's business,
And take no note of all its slippery changes.
'Twere best we make a world among ourselves,
A little world,
Without the ills and falsehoods of the greater;
We two being all the inhabitants of ours,
And kings and subjects both in one.—
*Sim.* Only the dangerous errors, fond conceits,
Which make the business of that greater world,
Must have no place in ours:
As namely, riches, honours, birth, place, courtesy,
Good fame and bad, rumours and popular noises,
Books, creeds, opinions, prejudices national,
Humours particular,
Soul-killing lies, and truths that work small good,
Feuds, factions, enmities, relationships,
Loves, hatreds, sympathies, antipathies,
And all the intricate stuff quarrels are made of.

MARGARET *enters in boy's apparel.*

*Sir Wal.* What pretty boy have we here?
*Marg. Bon jour, messieurs.* Ye have handsome English faces,
I should have ta'en you else for other two,
I came to seek in the forest.
*Sir Wal.* Who are they?
*Marg.* A gallant brace of Frenchmen, curl'd monsieurs,
That, men say, haunt these woods, affecting privacy,
More than the manner of their countrymen.
*Sim.* We have here a wonder.
The face is Margaret's face.
*Sir Wal.* The face is Margaret's, but the dress the same
My Stephen sometime wore.
(*To* MARG.) Suppose us them; whom do men say we are?
Or know you what you seek?
*Marg.* A worthy pair of exiles,
Two whom the politics of state revenge,
In final issue of long civil broils,
Have houseless driven from your native France
To wander idle in these English woods,
Where now ye live; most part
Thinking on home, and all the joys of France,
Where grows the purple vine.
*Sir Wal.* These woods, young stranger,

And grassy pastures, which the slim deer loves,
Are they less beauteous than the land of France,
Where grows the purple vine?
*Marg.* I cannot tell.
To an indifferent eye both show alik
'Tis not the scene,
But all familiar objects in the scene,
Which now ye miss, that constitute a difference.
Ye had a country, exiles, ye have none now;
Friends had ye, and much wealth, ye now have nothing;
Our manners, laws, our customs all are foreign to you,
I know ye loathe them, cannot learn them readily:
And there is reason, exiles, ye should love
Our English earth less than your land of France,
Where grows the purple vine; where all delights grow
Old custom has made pleasant.
*Sir Wal.* You, that are read
So deeply in our story, what are you?
*Marg.* A bare adventurer; in brief a woman,
That put strange garments on, and came thus far
To seek an ancient friend:
And having spent her stock of idle words,
And feeling some tears coming,
Hastes now to clasp Sir Walter Woodvil's knees,
And beg a boon for Margaret, his poor ward (*kneeling*).
*Sir Wal.* Not at my feet, Margaret, not at my feet.
*Marg.* Yes, till her suit is answer'd.
*Sir Wal.* Name it.
*Marg.* A little boon, and yet so great a grace,
She fears to ask it.
*Sir Wal.* Some riddle, Margaret?
*Marg.* No riddle, but a plain request.—
*Sir Wal.* Name it.
*Marg.* Free liberty of Sherwood,
And leave to take her lot with you in the forest.
*Sir Wal.* A scant petition, Margaret, but take it,
Seal'd with an old man's tears.—
Rise, daughter of Sir Rowland.
(*Addresses them both*) O you most worthy,
You constant followers of a man proscribed,
Following poor misery in the throat of danger;
Fast servitors to crazed and penniless poverty,
Serving poor poverty without hope of gain;
Kind children of a sire unfortunate;
Green clinging tendrils round a trunk decay'd,
Which needs must bring on you timeless decay;
Fair living forms to a dead carcase join'd;—
What shall I say?
Better the dead were gather'd to the dead,
Than death and life in disproportion meet.—
Go, seek your fortunes, children.—
*Sim.* Why, whither should we go?
*Sir Wal.* *You* to the court, where now your brother John
Commits a rape on Fortune:—
*Sim.* Luck to John!
A light-heel'd strumpet, when the sport is done.

*Sir Wal.* *You* to the sweet society of your equals,
Where the world's fashion smiles on youth and beauty:
*Marg.* Where young men's flatteries cozen young maids' beauty,
There pride oft gets the 'vantage hand of duty,
There sweet humility withers.
*Sim.* Mistress Margaret,
How fared my brother John, when you left Devon?
*Marg.* John was well, sir.
*Sim.* 'Tis now nine months almost,
Since I saw home. What new friends has John made?
Or keeps he his first love?—I did suspect
Some foul disloyalty. Now do I know,
John has proved false to her, for Margaret weeps.
It is a scurvy brother.
*Sir Wal.* Fie upon it!
All men are false, I think. The date of love
Is out, expired, its stories all grown stale,
O'erpast, forgotten, like an antique tale
Of Hero and Leander.
*Sim.* I have known some men that are too general-contemplative for the narrow passion. I am in some sort a *general* lover.
*Marg.* In the name of the boy-god, who plays at hoodman-blind with the Muses, and cares not whom he catches: what is it *you* love?
*Sim.* Simply, all things that live,
From the crook'd worm to man's imperial form,
And God-resembling likeness. The poor fly,
That makes short holyday in the sunbeam,
And dies by some child's hand. The feeble bird
With little wings, yet greatly venturous
In the upper sky. The fish in th' other element,
That knows no touch of eloquence. What else?
Yon tall and elegant stag,
Who paints a dancing shadow of his horns
In the water, where he drinks.
*Marg.* I myself love all these things, yet so as with a difference:—for example, some animals better than others, some men rather than other men; the nightingale before the cuckoo, the swift and graceful palfrey before the slow and asinine mule. Your humour goes to confound all qualities.
What sports do you use in the forest?
*Sim.* Not many; some few, as thus:—
To see the sun to bed, and to arise,
Like some hot amourist with glowing eyes,
Bursting the lazy bands of sleep that bound him,
With all his fires and travelling glories round him:
Sometimes the moon on soft night clouds to rest,
Like beauty nestling in a young man's breast,
And all the winking stars, her handmaids, keep
Admiring silence, while those lovers sleep:
Sometimes outstretch'd, in very idleness,
Nought doing, saying little, thinking less,
To view the leaves, thin dancers upon air,
Go eddying round; and small birds, how they fare,
When mother Autumn fills their beaks with corn,
Filch'd from the careless Amalthea's horn;
And how the woods berries and worms provide
Without their pains, when earth has nought beside

To answer their small wants:
To view the graceful deer come tripping
Then stop, and gaze, then turn, they know not why,
Like bashful younkers in society:
To mark the structure of a plant or tree;
And all fair things of earth, how fair they be.

*Marg.* (*smiling*). And afterwards them paint in simile.—

*Sir Wal.* Mistress Margaret will have need of some refreshment.
Please you, we have some poor viands within—

*Marg.* Indeed I stand in need of them.

*Sir Wal.* Under the shade of a thick-spreading tree,
Upon the grass, no better carpeting,
We'll eat our noon-tide meal; and, dinner done,
One of us shall repair to Nottingham,
To seek some safe night-lodging in the town,
Where you may sleep, while here with us you dwell,
By day, in the forest, expecting better times
And gentler habitations, noble Margaret.—

*Sim.* *Allons*, young Frenchman—

*Marg.* *Allons*, Sir Englishman. The time has been,
I've studied love-lays in the English tongue,
And been enamour'd of rare poesy:
Which now I must unlearn. Henceforth,
Sweet mother-tongue, old English speech, adieu;
For Margaret has got new name and language new. [*Exeunt.*

## ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE.—*An Apartment of State in Woodvil Hall.—Cavaliers drinking.*

JOHN WOODVIL, LOVEL, GRAY, *and four more.*

*John.* More mirth, I beseech you, gentlemen—
Mr. Gray, you are not merry.—

*Gray.* More wine, say I, and mirth shall ensue in course. What! we have not yet above three half-pints a man to answer for. Brevity is the soul of drinking, as of wit. Despatch, I say. More wine. (*Fills.*)

*1st Gent.* I entreat you, let there be some order, some method, in our drinkings. I love to lose my reason with my eyes open. To commit the deed of drunkenness with forethought and deliberation. I love to feel the fumes of the liquor gathering here, like clouds.

*2nd Gent.* And I am for plunging into madness at once. Damn order, and method, and steps, and degrees, that he speaks of. Let confusion have her legitimate work.

*Lov.* I marvel why the poets, who of all men, methinks, should possess the hottest livers, and most empyreal fancies, should affect to see such virtues in cold water.

*Gray.* Virtue in cold water! ha! ha! ha!—

*John.* Because your poet born hath an internal wine, richer than Lippara or Canaries, yet uncrushed from any grapes of earth, unpressed in mortal wine-presses.

*3rd Gent.* What may be the name of this wine?

*John.* It hath as many names as qualities. It is denominated indifferently, wit, conceit invention, inspiration; but its most royal and comprehensive name is *Fancy*.

*3rd Gent.* And where keeps he this sovereign liquor?

*John.* Its cellars are in the brain, whence your true poet deriveth intoxication at will; while his animal spirits, catching a pride from the quality and neighbourhood of their noble relative, the brain, refuse to be sustained by wines and stimuli of earth.

*3rd Gent.* But is your poet born always tipsy with this liquor?

*John.* He hath his stoopings and reposes; but his proper element is the sky, and in the suburbs of the empyrean.

*3rd Gent.* Is your wine intellectual so exquisite? henceforth I, a man of plain conceit, will in all humility content my mind with canaries.

*4th Gent.* I am for a song or a catch. When will the catches come on, the sweet wicked catches?

*John.* They cannot be introduced with propriety before midnight. Every man must commit his twenty bumpers first. We are not yet well roused. Frank Lovel, the toast stands with you.

*Lov.* Gentlemen, the Duke. (*Fills.*)

*All.* The Duke. (*They drink.*)

*Gray.* Can any tell, why his Grace, being a Papist—

*John.* Pshaw! we will have no questions of state now. Is not this his Majesty's birth-day?

*Gray.* What follows?

*John.* That every man should sing, and be joyful, and ask no questions.

*2nd Gent.* Damn politics, they spoil drinking.

*3rd Gent.* For certain, 'tis a blessed monarchy.

*2nd Gent.* The cursed fanatic days we have seen! The times have been when swearing was out of fashion.

*3rd Gent.* And drinking.

*1st Gent.* And wenching.

*Gray.* The cursed Yeas and Forsooths, which we have heard uttered, when a man could not rap out an innocent oath, but straight the air was thought to be infected.

*Lov.* 'Twas a pleasant trick of the saint, which that trim puritan, *Swear-not-at-all Smooth-speech* used, when his spouse chid him with an oath for committing with his servant-maid, to cause his house to be fumigated with burnt brandy, and ends of scripture, to disperse the devil's breath, as he termed it.

*All.* Ha! ha! ha!

*Gray.* But 'twas pleasanter, when the other saint, *Resist-the-devil-and-he-will-flee-from-thee Pureman* was overtaken in the act, to plead an *illusio visûs*, and maintain his sanctity upon a supposed power in the adversary to counterfeit the shapes of things.

*All.* Ha! ha! ha!

*John.* Another round, and then let every man devise what trick he can in his fancy, for the better manifesting our loyalty this day.

*Gray.* Shall we hang a puritan?

*John.* No, that has been done already in Coleman Street.

*2nd Gent.* Or fire a conventicle?

*John.* That is stale too.

*3rd Gent.* Or burn the Assembly's Catechism?

*4th Gent.* Or toast the king's health, every man standing upon his head naked?

*John.* (*to* LOVEL). We have here some pleasant madness

*3rd Gent.* (*dashing his glass down*). Pshaw, damn these acorn cups, they would not drench a fairy. Who shall pledge me in a pint bumper, while we drink the king's health upon our knees?

*Lov.* Why on our knees, cavalier?

*John* (*smiling*). For more devotion, to be sure. (*To a servant*) Sirrah, fetch the gilt goblets.

(*The goblets are brought. They drink the king's health kneeling. A shout of general approbation following the first appearance of the goblets.*)

*John.* We have here the unchecked virtues of the grape. How the vapours curl upwards! It were a life of gods to dwell in such an element: to see, and hear, and talk brave things. Now fie upon these casual potations. That a man's most exalted reason should depend upon the ignoble fermentation of a fruit, which sparrows pluck at as well as we!

*Gray* (*aside to* LOVEL). Observe how he is ravished.

*Lov.* Vanity and gay thoughts of wine do meet in him, and engender madness.

(*While the rest are engaged in a wild kind of talk,* JOHN *advances to the front of the stage, and soliloquizes.*)

*John.* My spirits turn to fire, they mount so fast.
My joys are turbulent, my hopes show like fruition.
These high and gusty relishes of life, sure,
Have no allayings of mortality in them.
I am too hot now and o'ercapable,
For the tedious processes, and creeping wisdom,
Of human acts, and enterprises of a man.
I want some seasonings of adversity,
Some strokes of the old mortifier, calamity,
To take these swellings down, divines call vanity.

*1st Gent.* Mr. Woodvil, Mr. Woodvil.

*2nd Gent.* Where is Woodvil?

*Gray.* Let him alone. I have seen him in these lunes before. His abstractions must not taint the good mirth.

*John* (*continuing to soliloquize*). O for some friend new,
To conceal nothing from, to have no secrets.
How fine and noble a thing is confidence
How reasonable too, and almost godlike!
Fast cement of fast friends, band of society,
Old natural go-between in the world's business,
Where civil life and order, wanting this cement,
Would presently rush back
Into the pristine state of singularity,
And each man stand alone.

*A Servant enters.*

*Serv.* Gentlemen, the fireworks are ready.

*1st Gent.* What be they?

*Lov.* The work of London artists, which our host has provided in honour of this day.

*2nd Gent.* 'Sdeath, who would part with his wine for a rocket?

*Lov.* Why truly, gentlemen, as our kind host has been at the pains to provide this spectacle, we can do no less than be present at it. It will not take up much time. Every man may return fresh and thirsting to his liquor.

*3rd ent.* There is reason in what he says.

*2nd Gent.* Charge on then, bottle in hand. There's husbandry in that.

[*They go out, singing. Only* LOVEL *remains, who observes* WOODVIL.

*John* (*still talking to himself*). This Lovel here's of a tough honesty,
Would put the rack to the proof. He is not of that sort.
Which haunt my house, snorting the liquors,
And, when their wisdoms are afloat with wine,

Spend vows as fast as vapours, which go off,
Even with the fumes, their fathers. He is one,
Whose sober morning actions
Shame not his o'ernight's promises;
Talks little, flatters less, and makes no promises;
Why this is he, whom the dark-wisdom'd fate
Might trust her counsels of predestination with,
And the world be no loser.
Why should I fear this man?
(*Seeing* LOVEL.) Where is the company gone?
*Lov.* To see the fireworks, where you will be expected to follow.
But I perceive you are better engaged.
*John.* I have been meditating this half-hour
On all the properties of a brave friendship,
The mysteries that are in it, the noble uses,
Its limits withal, and its nice boundaries.
*Exempli gratia*, how far a man
May lawfully forswear himself for his friend;
What quantity of lies, some of them brave ones,
He may lawfully incur in a friend's behalf;
What oaths, blood-crimes, hereditary quarrels,
Night-brawls, fierce words, and duels in the morning,
He need not stick at, to maintain his friend's honour, or his cause.
*Lov.* I think many men would die for their friends.
*John.* Death! why 'tis nothing. We go to it for sport,
To gain a name, or purse, or please a sullen humour,
When one has worn his fortune's livery threadbare,
Or his spleen'd mistress frowns. Husbands will venture on it,
To cure the hot fits and cold shakings of jealousy.
A friend, sir, must do more.
*Lov.* Can he do more than die?
*John.* To serve a friend this he may do. Pray mark me.
Having a law within (great spirits feel one)
He cannot, ought not to be bound by any
Positive laws or ordinances extern,
But may reject all these: by the law of friendship
He may do so much, be they, indifferently,
Penn'd statutes, or the land's unwritten usages,
As public fame, civil compliances,
Misnamed honour, trust in matter of secrets,
All vows and promises, the feeble mind's religion,
(Binding our morning knowledge to approve
What last night's ignorance spake);
The ties of blood withal, and prejudice of kin.
Sir, these weak terrors
Must never shake me. I know what belongs
To a worthy friendship. Come, you shall have my confidence.
*Lov.* I hope you think me worthy.
*John.* You will smile to hear now—
Sir Walter never has been out of the island.
*Lov.* You amaze me.
*John.* That same report of his escape to France
Was a fine tale, forged by myself—
Ha! ha!
I knew it would stagger him.—
*Lov.* Pray, give me leave.

Where has he dwelt, how lived, how lain conceal'd?
Sure I may ask so much.
*John.* From place to place, dwelling in no place long,
My brother Simon still hath borne him company,
('Tis a brave youth, I envy him all his virtues.)
Disguised in foreign garb, they pass for Frenchmen,
Two Protestant exiles from the Limosin
Newly arrived. Their dwelling's now at Nottingham,
Where no soul knows them.
*Lov.* Can you assign any reason a gentleman of Sir Walter's known prudence should expose his person so lightly?
*John.* I believe, a certain fondness,
A child-like cleaving to the land that gave him birth
Chains him like fate.
*Lov.* I have known some exiles thus
To linger out the term of the law's indulgence,
To the hazard of being known.--
*John.* You may suppose sometimes,
They use the neighbouring Sherwood for their sport,
Their exercise and freer recreation.—
I see you smile. Pray now, be careful
*Lov.* I am no babbler, sir; you need not fear me.
*John.* But some men have been known to talk in their sleep,
And tell fine tales that way.—
*Lov.* I have heard so much. But, to say truth, I mostly sleep alone.
*John.* Or drink, sir? do you never drink too freely?
Some men will drink, and tell you all their secrets.
*Lov.* Why do you question me, who know my habits?
*John.* I think you are no sot,
No tavern-troubler, worshipper of the grape;
But all men drink sometimes,
And veriest saints at festivals relax,
The marriage of a friend, or a wife's birthday.
*Lov.* How much, sir, may a man with safety drink? (*smiling*).
*John.* Sir, three half-pints a day is reasonable;
I care not if you never exceed that quantity.
*Lov.* I shall observe it;
On holidays two quarts.—
*John.* Or stay; you keep no wench?
*Lov.* Ha!
*John.* No painted mistress for your private hours?
You keep no whore, sir?
*Lov.* What does he mean?
*John.* Who for a close embrace, a toy of sin,
And amorous praising of your worship's breath,
In rosy junction of four melting lips,
Can kiss out secrets from you?
*Lov.* How strange this passionate behaviour shows in you!
Sure you think me some weak one.
*John.* Pray pardon me some fears.
You have now the pledge of a dear father's life.
I am a son—would fain be thought a loving one;
You may allow me some fears: do not despise me,
If, in a posture foreign to my spirit,
And by our well knit friendship I conjure you,
Touch not Sir Walter's life.— (*Kneels.*)

You see these tears. My father's an old man.
Pray let him live.
*Lov.* I must be bold to tell you, these new freedoms
Show most unhandsome in you.
*John* (*rising*). Ha! do you say so?
Sure, you are not grown proud upon my secret!
Ah! now I see it plain. He would be babbling.
No doubt a garrulous and hard-faced traitor—
But I'll not give you leave. (*Draws.*)
*Lov.* What does this madman mean?
*John.* Come, sir; here is no subterfuge.
You must kill me, or I kill you.
*Lov.* (*drawing*). Then self-defence plead my excuse.
Have at you, sir. (*They fight.*)
*John.* Stay, sir.
I hope you have made your will!
If not, 'tis no great matter.
A broken Cavalier has seldom much
He can bequeath: an old worn peruke,
A snuff-box with a picture of Prince Rupert,
A rusty sword he'll swear was used at Naseby,
Though it ne'er came within ten miles of the place;
And, if he's very rich,
A cheap edition of the *Icon Basilike*,
Is mostly all the wealth he dies possess'd of.
You say few prayers, I fancy;—
So to it again.
(*They fight again.* LOVEL *is disarmed.*
*Lov.* You had best now take my life. I guess you mean it.
*John* (*musing*). No:—men will say I fear'd him, if I kill'd him.
Live still, and be a traitor in thy wish,
But never act thy thought, being a coward.
That vengeance, which thy soul shall nightly thirst for,
And this disgrace I've done you cry aloud for,
Still have the will without the power to execute,
As unfear'd Eunuchs meditate a rape.
So now I leave you,
Feeling a sweet security. No doubt
My secret shall remain a virgin for you!— (*Goes out, smiling in scorn.*)
*Lov.* (*rising*). For once you are mistaken in your man.
The deed you wot of shall forthwith be done.
A bird let loose, a secret out of hand,
Returns not back. Why, then 'tis baby policy
To menace him who hath it in his keeping.
I will go look for Gray;
Then Northward ho! such tricks as we shall play
Have not been seen, I think, in merry Sherwood,
Since the days of Robin Hood, that archer good.

## ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE.—*An Apartment in Woodvil Hall.*

*John Woodvil* (*alone*). A weight of wine lies heavy on my head,
The unconcocted follies of last night.

Now all those jovial fancies, and bright hopes,
Children of wine, go off like dreams.
This sick vertigo here
Preacheth of temperance, no sermon better.
These black thoughts, and dull melancholy,
That stick like burrs to the brain, will they ne'er leave me?
Some men are full of choler, when they are drunk;
Some brawl of matter foreign to themselves;
And some, the most resolvèd fools of all,
Have told their dearest secrets in their cups.

SCENE.—*The Forest.*

SIR WALTER. SIMON. LOVEL. GRAY.

*Lov.* Sir, we are sorry we cannot return your *French* salutation.

*Gray.* Nor otherwise consider this garb you trust to, than as a poor disguise.

*Lov.* Nor use much ceremony with a traitor.

*Gray.* Therefore, without much induction of superfluous words, I attach you, Sir Walter Woodvil, of high treason in the king's name.

*Lov.* And of taking part in the great Rebellion against our late lawful sovereign, Charles the First.

*Sim.* John has betrayed us, father

*Lov.* Come, sir, you had best surrender fairly. We know you, sir.

*Sim.* Hang ye, villains, ye are two better known than trusted. I have seen those faces before. Are ye not two beggarly retainers, trencher-parasites, to John? I think,ye rank above his footmen. A sort of bed and board-worms—locusts that infest our house; a leprosy that long has hung upon its walls and princely apartments, reaching to fill all the corners of my brother's once noble heart.

*Gray.* We are his friends.

*Sim.* Fie, sir, do not weep. How these rogues will triumph! Shall I whip off their heads, father? (*Draws.*)

*Lov.* Come, sir, though this show handsome in you, being his son, yet the law must have its course.

*Sim.* And if I tell you, the law shall not have its course, cannot ye be content? Courage, father; shall such things as these apprehend a man? Which of ye will venture upon me?—Will you, Mr. Constable self-elect? or you, sir, with a pimple on your nose, got at Oxford by hard drinking, your only badge of loyalty?

*Gray.* 'Tis a brave youth—I cannot strike at him.

*Sim.* Father, why do you cover your face with your hands? Why do you fetch your breath so hard? See, villains, his heart is burst! O, villains, he cannot speak. One of you run for some water: quickly, ye knaves; will ye have your throats cut? [*They both slink off.*
How is it with you, Sir Walter? Look up, sir; the villains are gone. He hears me not, and this deep disgrace of treachery in his son hath touched him even to the death. O most distuned and distempered world, where sons talk their aged fathers into their graves! Garrulous and diseased world, and still empty, rotten and hollow *talking* world, where good men decay, states turn round in an endless mutability, and still for the worse, nothing is at a stay, nothing abides, but vanity, chaotic vanity.—Brother, adieu!
There lies the parent stock which gave us life,
Which I will see consign'd with tears to earth.
Leave thou the solemn funeral rites to me,
Grief and a true remorse abide with thee. [*Bears in the body.*

SCENE.—*Another part of the Forest.*

*Marg.* (*alone*). It was an error merely, and no crime,
An unsuspecting openness in youth,
That from his lips the fatal secret drew,
Which should have slept like one of nature's mysteries,
Unveil'd by any man.—
Well, he is dead!
And what should Margaret do in the forest?
O ill-starr'd John!
O Woodvil, man enfeoffed to despair!
Take thy farewell of peace.
O never look again to see good days,
Or close thy lids in comfortable nights,
Or ever think a happy thought again,
If what I have heard be true.—
Forsaken of the world must Woodvil live,
If he did tell these men.
No tongue must speak to him, no tongue of man
Salute him, when he wakes up in a morning;
Or bid "good-night" to John. Who seeks to live
In amity with thee, must for thy sake
Abide the world's reproach. What then?
Shall Margaret join the clamours of the world
Against her friend? O undiscerning world,
That cannot from misfortune separate guilt,
No, not in thought! O never, never, John.
Prepared to share the fortunes of her friend
*For better or for worse* thy Margaret comes,
To pour into thy wounds a healing love,
And wake the memory of an ancient friendship.
And pardon me, thou spirit of Sir Walter,
Who, in compassion to the wretched living,
Have but few tears to waste upon the dead.

SCENE.—*Woodvil Hall.*

SANDFORD *and* MARGARET (*as from a journey*).

*Sand.* The violence of the sudden mischance has so wrought in him, who by nature is allied to nothing *less* than a self-debasing humour of dejection, that I have never seen anything more changed and spirit-broken. He hath, with a peremptory resolution, dismissed the partners of his riots and late hours, denied his house and person to their most earnest solicitings, and will be seen by none. He keeps ever alone, and his grief (which is solitary) does not so much seem to possess and govern in him, as it is by him, with a wilfulness of most manifest affection, entertained and cherished.

*Marg.* How bears he up against the common rumour?

*Sand.* With a strange indifference, which whosoever dives not into the niceness of his sorrow, might mistake for obdurate and insensate. Yet are the wings of his pride for ever clipt; and yet a virtuous predominance of filial grief is so ever uppermost, that you may discover his thoughts, less troubled with conjecturing what living opinions will say and judge of his deeds, than absorbed and buried with the dead, whom his indiscretion made so.

*Marg.* I knew a greatness ever to be resident in him, to which the admiring

eyes of men should look up even in the declining and bankrupt state of his pride. Fain would I see him, fain talk with him; but that a sense of respect, which is violated, when without deliberation we press into the society of the unhappy, checks and holds me back. How, think you, he would bear my presence?

*Sand.* As of an assured friend, whom in the forgetfulness of his fortunes he passed by. See him you must; but not to-night. The newness of the sight shall move the bitterest compunction and the truest remorse; but afterwards, trust me, dear lady, the happiest effects of a returning peace, and a gracious comfort, to him, to you, and all of us.

*Marg.* I think he would not deny me. He hath ere this received farewell letters from his brother, who hath taken a resolution to estrange himself, for a time, from country, friends, and kindred, and to seek occupation for his sad thoughts in travelling in foreign places, where sights remote and extern to himself may draw from him kindly and not painful ruminations.

*Sand.* I was present at the receipt of the letter. The contents seemed to affect him, for a moment, with a more lively passion of grief than he has at any time outwardly shown. He wept with many tears (which I had not before noted in him) and appeared to be touched with a sense as of some unkindness; but the cause of their sad separation and divorce quickly recurring, he presently returned to his former inwardness of suffering.

*Marg.* The reproach of his brother's presence at this hour should have been a weight more than could be sustained by his already oppressed and sinking spirit. Meditating upon these intricate and wide-spread sorrows, hath brought a heaviness upon me, as of sleep. How goes the night?

*Sand.* An hour past sunset. You shall first refresh your limbs (tired with travel) with meats and some cordial wine, and then betake your no less wearied mind to repose.

*Marg.* A good rest to us all.

*Sand.* Thanks, lady.

## ACT THE FIFTH.

JOHN WOODVIL (*dressing*).

*John.* How beautiful (*handling his mourning*)
And comely do these mourning garments show!
Sure Grief hath set his sacred impress here,
To claim the world's respect! they note so feelingly
By outward types the serious man within.
Alas! what part or portion can I claim
In all the decencies of virtuous sorrow,
Which other mourners use?
This black attire, abstraction from society,
Good thoughts, and frequent sighs, and seldom smiles,
A cleaving sadness native to the brow.
All sweet condolements of like-grievèd friends,
(That steal away the sense of loss almost)
Men's pity and good offices
Which enemies themselves do for us then,
Putting their hostile disposition off,
As we put off our high thoughts and proud looks.
[*Pauses and observes the pictures.*
These pictures must be taken down:

The portraitures of our most ancient family
For nigh three hundred years! How have I listen'd,
To hear Sir Walter, with an old man's pride,
Holding me in his arms a prating boy,
And pointing to the pictures where they hung,
Repeat by course their worthy histories,
(As Hugh de Widville, Walter, first of the name,
And Anne the handsome, Stephen, and famous John:
Telling me, I must be his famous John)
But that was in old times,
Now, no more
Must I grow proud upon our house's pride.
I rather, I, by most unheard-of crimes,
Have backward tainted all their noble blood,
Rased out the memory of an ancient family,
And quite reversed the honours of our house—
Who now shall sit and tell us anecdotes?
The secret history of his own times,
And fashions of the world when he was young:
How England slept out three and twenty years,
While Carr and Villiers ruled the baby King:
The costly fancies of the pedant's reign,
Balls, feastings, huntings, shows in allegory,
And Beauties of the court of James the First.

MARGARET *enters.*

*John.* Comes Margaret here to witness my disgrace?
O lady, I have suffer'd loss,
And diminution of my honour's brightness.
You bring some images of old times, Margaret,
That should be now forgotten.
*Marg.* Old times should never be forgotten, John.
I came to talk about them with my friend.
*John.* I did refuse you, Margaret, in my pride.
*Marg.* If John rejected Margaret in his pride,
(As who does not, being splenetic, refuse
Sometimes old play-fellows) the spleen being gone,
The offence no longer lives.
O Woodvil, those were happy days,
When we two first began to love. When first,
Under pretence of visiting my father,
(Being then a stripling nigh upon my age)
You came a-wooing to his daughter, John.
Do you remember,
With what a coy reserve and seldom speech,
(Young maidens must be chary of their speech)
I kept the honours of my maiden pride?
I was your favourite then.
*John.* O Margaret, Margaret!
These your submissions to my low estate,
And cleavings to the fates of sunken Woodvil,
Write bitter things 'gainst my unworthiness:
Thou perfect pattern of thy slander'd sex,
Whom miseries of mine could never alienate,
Nor change of fortune shake; whom injuries,

And slights (the worst of injuries) which moved
Thy nature to return scorn with like scorn,
Then when you left in virtuous pride this house,
Could not so separate, but now in this
My day of shame, when all the world forsake me,
You only visit me, love, and forgive me.

*Marg.* Dost yet remember the green arbour, John,
In the south gardens of my father's house,
Where we have seen the summer sun go down,
Exchanging true love's vows without restraint?
And that old wood, you call'd your wilderness,
And vow'd in sport to build a chapel in it,
There dwell

> "Like hermit poor
> In pensive place obscure,"

And tell your Ave Maries by the curls
(Dropping like golden beads) of Margaret's hair;
And make confession seven times a day
Of every thought that stray'd from love and Margaret,
And I your saint the penance should appoint—
Believe me, sir, I will not now be laid
Aside, like an old fashion.

*John.* O lady, poor and abject are my thoughts,
My pride is cured, my hopes are under clouds,
I have no part in any good man's love,
In all earth's pleasures portion have I none,
I fade and wither in my own esteem,
This earth holds not alive so poor a thing as I am.
I was not always thus. (*Weeps.*)

*Marg.* Thou noble nature,
Which lion-like didst awe the inferior creatures,
Now trampled on by beasts of basest quality,
My dear heart's lord, life's pride, soul-honour'd John;
Upon her knees (regard her poor request)
Your favourite, once-belovèd Margaret, kneels.

*John.* What wouldst thou, lady, ever-honour'd Margaret?

*Marg.* That John would think more nobly of himself,
More worthily of high heaven;
And not for one misfortune, child of chance,
No crime, but unforeseen, and sent to punish
The less offence with image of the greater,
Thereby to work the soul's humility,
(Which end hath happily not been frustrâte quite)
O not for one offence mistrust heaven's mercy,
Nor quit thy hope of happy days to come—
John yet has many happy days to live;
To live and make atonement.

*John.* Excellent lady,
Whose suit hath drawn this softness from my eyes,
Not the world's scorn, nor falling off of friends
Could ever do. Will you go with me, Margaret?

*Marg.* (*rising*). Go whither, John?

*John.* Go in with me,
And pray for the peace of our unquiet minds?

*Marg.* That I will, John. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*An inner Apartment.*

JOHN *is discovered kneeling.*—MARGARET *standing over him.*

*John* (*rises*). I cannot bear
To see you waste that youth and excellent beauty
('Tis now the golden time of the day with you)
In tending such a broken wretch as I am.
*Marg.* John will break Margaret's heart, if he speak so.
O sir, sir, sir, you are too melancholy,
And I must call it caprice. I am somewhat bold
Perhaps in this. But you are now my patient,
(You know you gave me leave to call you so)
And I must chide these pestilent humours from you.
*John.* They are gone.--
Mark, love, how cheerfully I speak!
I can smile too, and I almost begin
To understand what kind of creature hope is.
*Marg.* Now this is better, this mirth becomes you, John.
*John.* Yet tell me, if I overact my mirth,
(Being but a novice, I may fall into that error)
That were a sad indecency, you know.—
*Marg.* Nay, never fear.
I will be mistress of your humours,
And you shall frown or smile by the book.
And herein I shall be most peremptory,
Cry "this shows well, but that inclines to levity,
This frown has too much of the Woodvil in it,
But that fine sunshine has redeem'd it quite."
*John.* How sweetly Margaret robs me of myself!
*Marg.* To give you in your stead a better self;
Such as you were, when these eyes first beheld
You mounted on your sprightly steed White Margery,
Sir Rowland, my father's gift,
And all my maidens gave my heart for lost.
I was a young thing then, being newly come
Home from my convent education, where
Seven years I wasted in the bosom of France:
Returning home true Protestant, you call'd me
Your little heretic nun. How timid-bashful
Did John salute his love, being newly seen.
Sir Rowland term'd it a rare modesty,
And praised it in a youth.
*John.* Now Margaret weeps herself.
(*A noise of bells heard.*)
*Marg.* Hark the bells, John.
*John.* Those are the church bells of St. Mary Ottery.
*Marg.* I know it.
*John.* Saint Mary Ottery, my native village
In the sweet shire of Devon.
Those are the bells.
*Marg.* Wilt go church, John
*John.* I have been there already.

*Marg.* How canst say thou hast been there already? 'Tis not yet ten o'clock. The bells are only now ringing for morning service, and hast thou been at church already?

*John.* I left my bed betimes, I could not sleep,
And when I rose, I look'd (as my custom is)
From my chamber window, where I can see the sun rise;
And the first object I discern'd
Was the glistering spire of St. Mary Ottery.
*Marg.* Well, John.—
*John.* Then I remember'd, 'twas the sabbath day,
Immediately a wish arose in my mind,
To go to church and pray with Christian people,
And then I check'd myself, and said to myself,
"Thou hast been a heathen, John, these two years past,"
(Not having been at church in all that time)
"And is it fit, that now for the first time
Thou should'st offend the eyes of Christian people
With a murderer's presence in the house of prayer?
Thou would'st but discompose their pious thoughts,
And do thyself no good: for how could'st thou pray,
With unwash'd hands, and lips unused to the offices?"
And then I at my own presumption smiled;
And then I wept that I should smile at all,
Having such cause of grief! I wept outright;
Tears, like a river, flooded all my face,
And I began to pray, and found I could pray;
And still I yearn'd to say my prayers in the church.
"Doubtless (said I) one might find comfort in it."
So stealing down the stairs, like one that fear'd detection,
Or was about to act unlawful business
At that dead time of dawn,
I flew to the church, and found the doors wide open
(Whether by negligence I knew not,
Or some peculiar grace to me vouchsafed,
For all things felt like mystery).
*Marg.* Yes.
*John.* So entering in, not without fear,
I pass'd into the family pew,
And covering up my eyes for shame,
And deep perception of unworthiness,
Upon the little hassock knelt me down,
Where I so oft had kneel'd,
A docile infant by Sir Walter's side;
And, thinking so, I wept a second flood
More poignant than the first;—
But afterwards was greatly comforted.
It seem'd, the guilt of blood was passing from me
Even in the act and agony of tears,
And all my sins forgiven.

# The Witch:

## A DRAMATIC SKETCH OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

[This "solemnly fantastic poem," as Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd calls it, first appeared in the 1818 edition of Charles Lamb's Collected Works. It is demonstrated by Mr. Carew Hazlitt in his volume of 1874, entitled "Charles and Mary Lamb: Poems, Letters, and Remains, now first collected, with Reminiscences and Notes," to have been originally an integral portion of the tragedy of *John Woodvil*, from which it was probably eliminated when that drama was for a second time submitted to Kemble's consideration.]

### CHARACTERS.

*Old Servant in the Family of* SIR FRANCIS FAIRFORD. STRANGER.

*Servant.* One summer night Sir Francis, as it chanced,
Was pacing to and fro in the avenue
That westward fronts our house,
Among those agèd oaks, said to have been planted
Three hundred years ago
By a neighbouring prior of the Fairford name.
Being o'ertask'd in thought, he heeded not
The importunate suit of one who stood by the gate,
And begg'd an alms.
Some say he shoved her rudely from the gate
With angry chiding; but I can never think
(Our master's nature hath a sweetness in it)
That he could use a woman, an old woman,
With such discourtesy: but he refused her—
And better had he met a lion in his path
Than that old woman that night;
For she was one who practised the black arts,
And served the devil, being since burnt for witchcraft.
She look'd on him as one that meant to blast him,
And with a frightful noise
('Twas partly like a woman's voice,
And partly by the hissing of a snake),
She nothing said but this:—
(Sir Francis told the words)

*A mischief, mischief, mischief,*
*And a nine-times-killing curse,*
*By day and by night, to the caitiff wight,*
*Who shakes the poor like snakes from his door,*
*And shuts up the womb of his purse.*

And still she cried—

*A mischief,*
*And a nine-fold-withering curse:*
*For that shall come to thee that will undo thee,*
*Both all that thou fearest and worse.*

So saying she departed,
Leaving Sir Francis like a man, beneath
Whose feet a scaffolding was suddenly falling;
So he described it.
*Str.* A terrible curse! What follow'd?
*Serv.* Nothing immediate, but some two months after
Young Philip Fairford suddenly fell sick,
And none could tell what ail'd him; for he lay,
And pined, and pined, till all his hair fell off,
And he, that was full-flesh'd, became as thin
As a two-months' babe that had been starved in the nursing.
And sure I think
He bore his death-wound like a little child;
With such rare sweetness of dumb melancholy
He strove to clothe his agony in smiles,
Which he would force up in his poor pale cheeks,
Like ill-timed guests that had no proper dwelling there;
And, when they ask'd him his complaint, he laid
His hand upon his heart to show the place,
Where Susan came to him a-nights, he said,
And prick'd him with a pin.—
And thereupon Sir Francis call'd to mind
The beggar-witch that stood by the gateway
And begged an alms.
*Str.* But did the witch confess?
*Serv.* All this and more at her death.
*Str.* I do not love to credit tales of magic.
Heaven's music, which is Order, seems unstrung,
And this brave world
(The Mystery of God) unbeautified,
Disorder'd, marr'd, where such strange things are acted.

# Mr. H——:

## A FARCE IN TWO ACTS.

*As it was performed at Drury Lane Theatre, 10th* December, 1806.

[Prefixed to every edition yet published of this whimsical farce, there has been printed, in obedience to the author's directions, the excellent account which will be found given, immediately after this bracketed note, proclaiming to the world, as if by the flourish of a tin trumpet, the fact that *Mr. H——* was damned! One could almost fancy that Charles Lamb himself wrote this rejoicing record of his own discomfiture in the *Theatrical Examiner.* It accords so exactly, in the whole spirit of it, with the ludicrous story related in regard to his own conduct on the night of its first performance. Going into Drury Lane Theatre on the evening of that Wednesday, the 10th of December, 1806, to witness, as he had fondly hoped, his own triumph, Charles Lamb—thus runs the legend—found himself so entirely of opinion with the audience, as the piece went on, that from his place in the middle of the pit, he was conspicuous among the very heartiest in hissing it off the stage. Even that "joyousest of once embodied spirits," Robert William Elliston, who was the hero of the farce, although assisted by Miss Mellon, afterwards the Duchess of St. Albans, by Bartley, and by Wewitzer, failed to carry off the intrinsic absurdity of the reticent H—— whose surname turned out to be after all only Hogsflesh. Doomed to damnation though it was in England, *Mr. H——*, it ought here to be added, has often been performed in the United States, not merely with applause, but with shouts of laughter.]

"*Mr. H——*, thou wert DAMNED. Bright shone the morning on the play-bills that announced thy appearance, and the streets were filled with the buzz of persons asking one another if they would go to see *Mr. H——*, and answering that they would certainly; but before night the gaiety, not of the author, but of his friends and the town, was eclipsed, for thou wert DAMNED! Hadst thou been anonymous, thou haply mightst have lived. But thou didst come to an untimely end for thy tricks, and for want of a better name to pass them off——."—*Theatrical Examiner.*

### CHARACTERS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Mr. H—— | *Mr. Elliston.* |
| BELVIL | *Mr. Bartley.* |
| LANDLORD PRY | *Mr. Wewitzer.* |
| MELESINDA | *Miss Mellon.* |
| MAID TO MELESINDA | *Mrs. Harlowe.* |

GENTLEMEN, LADIES, WAITERS, SERVANTS, &c.

SCENE.—*Bath.*

### PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. ELLISTON.

IF we have sinn'd in paring down a name,
All civil well-bred authors do the same,
Survey the columns of our daily writers—
You'll find that some Initials are great fighters.
How fierce the shock, how fatal is the jar,
When Ensign W. meets Lieutenant R.

With two stout seconds, just of their own gizzard,
Cross Captain X. and rough old General Izzard!
Letter to letter spreads the dire alarms,
Till half the Alphabet is up in arms.
Nor with less lustre have Initials shone,
To grace the gentler annals of crim. con.
Where the dispensers of the public lash
Soft penance give—a letter and a dash——
Where vice reduced in size shrinks to a failing,
And loses half her grossness by curtailing.
Faux pas are told in such a modest way,—
The affair of Colonel B—— with Mrs. A——
You must forgive them—for what is there, say,
Which such a pliant Vowel must not grant
To such a very pressing Consonant?
Or who poetic justice dares dispute,
When, mildly melting at a lover's suit,
The wife's a Liquid, her good man a Mute?
Even in the homelier scenes of honest life,
The coarse-spun intercourse of man and wife,
Initials I am told have taken place
Of Deary, Spouse, and that old-fashion'd race;
And Cabbage, ask'd by Brother Snip to tea,
Replies, "I'll come—but it don't rest with me—
I always leaves them things to Mrs. C."
O should this mincing fashion ever spread
From names of living heroes to the dead,
How would Ambition sigh, and hang the head,
As each loved syllable should melt away—
Her Alexander turn'd into Great A.—
A single C. her Cæsar to express—
Her Scipio shrunk into a Roman S.;—
And, nick'd and dock'd to these new modes of speech,
Great Hannibal himself a Mr. H.

## ACT I.

SCENE.—*A Public Room in an Inn—Landlord, Waiters, Gentlemen, &c.*
*Enter* MR. H.

*Mr. H.* Landlord, has the man brought home my boots?

*Land.* Yes, sir.

*Mr. H.* You have paid him?

*Land.* There is the receipt, sir, only not quite filled up; no name, only blank —"Blank, Dr. to Zekiel Spanish for one pair of best hessians." Now, sir, he wishes to know what name he shall put in—who he shall say "Dr."

*Mr. H.* Why, Mr. H, to be sure.

*Land.* So I told him, sir; but Zekiel has some qualms about it. He says, he thinks that Mr. H. only would not stand good in law.

*Mr. H.* Rot his impertinence! bid him put in Nebuchadnezzar, and not trouble me with his scruples.

*Land.* I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

*Enter a Waiter.*

*Wait.* Sir, Squire Level's man is below, with a hare and a brace of pheasants for Mr. H.

*Mr. H.* Give the man half-a-crown, and bid him return my best respects

to his master. Presents, it seems, will find me out, with any name, or no name.

*Enter 2nd Waiter.*

*2nd Wait.* Sir, the man that makes up the Directory is at the door.

*Mr. H.* Give him a shilling; that is what these fellows come for.

*2nd Wait.* He has sent up to know by what name your Honour will please to be inserted.

*Mr. H.* Zounds, fellow! I give him a shilling for leaving out my name, not for putting it in. This is one of the plaguy comforts of going anonymous. [*Exit 2nd Waiter.*

*Enter 3rd Waiter.*

*3rd Wait.* Two letters for Mr. H. [*Exit.*

*Mr. H.* From ladies (*opens them*). This from Melesinda, to remind me of the morning call I promised; the pretty creature positively languishes to be made Mrs. H. I believe I must indulge her (*affectedly*). This from her cousin, to bespeak me to some party, I suppose (*opening it*)—Oh, "this evening"—"Tea and cards"—(*surveying himself with complacency*). Dear H., thou art certainly a pretty fellow. I wonder what makes thee such a favourite among the ladies: I wish it may not be owing to the concealment of thy unfortunate——pshaw!

*Enter 4th Waiter.*

*4th Wait.* Sir, one Mr. Printagain is inquiring for you.

*Mr. H.* Oh, I remember, the poet: he is publishing by subscription. Give him a guinea, and tell him he may put me down.

*4th Wait.* What name shall I tell him, sir?

*Mr. H.* Zounds! he is a poet; let him fancy a name. [*Exit 4th Waiter.*

*Enter 5th Waiter.*

*5th Wait.* Sir, Bartlemy the lame beggar, that you sent a private donation to last Monday, has by some accident discovered his benefactor, and is at the door waiting to return thanks.

*Mr. H.* Oh, poor fellow, who could put it into his head? Now I shall be teased by all his tribe, when once this is known. Well, tell him I am glad I could be of any service to him, and send him away.

*5th Wait.* I would have done so, sir; but the object of his call now, he says, is only to know who he is obliged to.

*Mr. H.* Why, me.

*5th Wait.* Yes, sir.

*Mr. H.* Me, me, me—who else, to be sure?

*5th Wait.* Yes, sir; but he is anxious to know the name of his benefactor.

*Mr. H.* Here is a pampered rogue of a beggar, that cannot be obliged to a gentleman in the way of his profession, but he must know the name, birth, parentage, and education of his benefactor. I warrant you, next he will require a certificate of one's good behaviour, and a magistrate's licence in one's pocket, lawfully empowering So-and-so to——give an alms. Anything more?

*5th Wait.* Yes, sir: here has been Mr. Patriot, with the county petition to sign; and Mr. Failtime, that owes so much money, has sent to remind you of your promise to bail him.

*Mr. H.* Neither of which I can do while I have no name. Here is more of the plaguy comforts of going anonymous, that one can neither serve one's friend nor one's country. Damn it, a man had better be without a nose than without a name! I will not live long in this mutilated, dismembered state; I will to Melesinda this instant, and try to forget these vexations. Melesinda!

there is music in the name; but then, hang it! there is none in mine to answer to it. [*Exit.*

(*While* MR. H. *has been speaking, two gentlemen have been observing him curiously.*)

*1st Gent.* Who the devil is this extraordinary personage?

*2nd Gent.* Who? why, 'tis Mr. H.

*1st Gent.* Has he no more name?

*2nd Gent.* None that has yet transpired. No more! why, that single letter has been enough to inflame the imaginations of all the ladies in Bath. He has been here but a fortnight, and is already received into all the first families.

*1st Gent.* Wonderful! yet nobody knows who he is, or where he comes from!

*2nd Gent.* He is vastly rich, gives away money as if he had infinity; dresses well, as you see; and for address, the mothers are all dying for fear the daughters should get him; and for the daughters, he may command them as absolutely as——. Melesinda, the rich heiress, 'tis thought, will carry him.

*1st Gent.* And is it possible that a mere anonymous——

*2nd Gent.* Phoo! that is the charm, Who is he? and What is he? and What is his name?——The man with the great nose on his face never excited more of the gaping passion of wonderment in the dames of Strasburg than this new-comer with the single letter to his name has lighted up among the wives and maids of Bath; his simply having lodgings here draws more visitors to the house than an election. Come with me to the parade, and I will show you more of him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*In the Street.*

MR. H. *walking*, BELVIL *meeting him.*

*Bel.* My old Jamaica schoolfellow, that I have not seen for so many years? it must, it can be no other than Jack (*going up to him*). My dear Ho——

*Mr. H.* (*stopping his mouth*). Ho——! the devil—hush!

*Bel.* Why, sure it is——

*Mr. H.* It is; it is your old friend Jack, that shall be nameless.

*Bel.* My dear Ho——

*Mr. H.* (*stopping him*). Don't name it.

*Bel.* Name what?

*Mr. H.* My cursed unfortunate name. I have reasons to conceal it for a time.

*Bel.* I understand you—Creditors, Jack?

*Mr. H.* No, I assure you.

*Bel.* Snapped up a ward, peradventure, and the whole Chancery at your heels?

*Mr. H.* I don't use to travel with such cumbersome luggage.

*Bel.* You ha'n't taken a purse?

*Mr. H.* To relieve you at once from all disgraceful conjectures, you must know 'tis nothing but the sound of my name.

*Bel.* Ridiculous! 'Tis true yours is none of the most romantic, but what can that signify in a man?

*Mr. H.* You must understand that I am in some credit with the ladies.

*Bel.* With the ladies!

*Mr. H.* And truly I think not without some pretensions. My fortune——

*Bel.* Sufficiently splendid, if I may judge from your appearance.

*Mr. H.* My figure——

*Bel.* Airy, gay, and imposing.

*Mr. H.* My parts——

*Bel.* Bright.

*Mr. H.* My conversation ——

*Bel.* Equally remote from flippancy and taciturnity.

*Mr. H.* But then my name—damn my name!

*Bel.* Childish!

*Mr. H.* Not so. Oh! Belvil, you are blest with one which sighing virgins may repeat without a blush, and for it change the paternal. But what virgin of any delicacy (and I require some in a wife) would endure to be called Mrs———?

*Bel.* Ha! ha! ha! most absurd! Did not Clementina Falconbridge—the romantic Clementina Falconbridge—fancy Tommy Potts? and Rosabella Sweetlips sacrifice her mellifluous appellative to Jack Deady? Matilda, her cousin, married a Gubbins, and her sister Amelia a Clutterbuck.

*Mr. H.* Potts is tolerable, Deady is sufferable, Gubbins is bearable, and Clutterbuck is endurable, but Ho ——

*Bel.* Hush! Jack, don't betray yourself. But you are really ashamed of the family name?

*Mr. H.* Ay, and of my father that begot me, and my father's father, and all their forefathers that have borne it since the Conquest.

*Bel.* But how do you know the women are so squeamish?

*Mr. H.* I have tried them. I tell you there is neither maiden of sixteen nor widow of sixty but would turn up their noses at it. I have been refused by nineteen virgins, twenty-nine reliets, and two old maids.

*Bel.* That was hard indeed, Jack!

*Mr. H.* Parsons have stuck at publishing the banns, because they averred it was a heathenish name; parents have lingered their consent, because they suspected it was a fictitious name; and rivals have declined my challenges, because they pretended it was an ungentlemanly name.

*Bel.* Ha! ha! ha! but what course do you mean to pursue?

*Mr. H.* To engage the affections of some generous girl, who will be content to take me as Mr. H.

*Bel.* Mr. H.?

*Mr. H.* Yes, that is the name I go by here; you know one likes to be as near the truth as possible.

*Bel.* Certainly. But what then?—to get her to consent ——

*Mr. H.* To accompany me to the altar without a name ——: in short, to suspend her curiosity (that is all) till the moment the priest shall pronounce the irrevocable charm which makes two names one.

*Bel.* And that name ——and then she must be pleased, ha! Jack?

*Mr. H.* Exactly such a girl it has been my fortune to meet with. Heark'ee (*whispers*) ——(*musing*) yet, hang it! 'tis cruel to betray her confidence.

*Bel.* But the family name, Jack?

*Mr. H.* As you say, the family name must be perpetuated.

*Bel.* Though it be but a homely one.

*Mr. H.* True; but, come, I will show you the house where dwells this credulous melting fair.

*Bel.* Ha, ha! my old friend dwindled down to one letter. *Exeunt.*

*An Apartment in* MELESINDA'S *House.*

MELESINDA *sola, as if musing.*

*Mel.* H., H., H.? Sure it must be something precious by its being concealed. It can't be Homer, that is a heathen's name; nor Horatio, that is no surname; what if it be Hamlet? the Lord Hamlet—pretty, and I his poor distracted Ophelia! No, 'tis none of these; 'tis Harcourt or Hargrave, or some such sounding name, or Howard—high-born Howard—that would do. Maybe it is

Harley; methinks my H. resembles Harley—the feeling Harley. But I hear him, and from his own lips I will once for ever be resolved.

*Enter* MR. H.

*Mr. H.* My dear Melesinda!

*Mel.* My dear H., that is all you give me power to swear allegiance to,—to be enamoured of inarticulate sounds, and call with sighs upon an empty letter. But I will know.

*Mr. H.* My dear Melesinda, press me no more for the disclosure of that which in the face of day so soon must be revealed. Call it whim, humour, caprice in me. Suppose I have sworn an oath never, till the ceremony of our marriage is over, to disclose my true name.

*Mel.* Oh! H., H., H., I cherish here a fire of restless curiosity which consumes me. 'Tis appetite, passion; call it whim, caprice in me. Suppose I have sworn I must and will know it this very night.

*Mr. H.* Ungenerous Melesinda! I implore you to give me this one proof of your confidence. The holy vow once past, your H. shall not have a secret to withhold.

*Mel.* My H. has overcome: his Melesinda shall pine away and die before she dares express a saucy inclination; but what shall I call you till we are married?

*Mr. H.* Call me? call me anything. Call me Love, Love! Ay, Love, Love will do very well.

*Mel.* How many syllables is it, Love?

*Mr. H.* How many? ud, that is coming to the question with a vengeance. One, two, three, four,—what does it signify how many syllables?

*Mel.* How many syllables, Love?

*Mr. H.* My Melesinda's mind, I had hoped, was superior to this childish curiosity.

*Mel.* How many letters are there in it?

[*Exit* MR. H., *followed by* MELESINDA *repeating the question.*

SCENE.—*A Room in the Inn. Two Waiters disputing.*

*1st Wait.* Sir Harbottle Hammond, you may depend upon it!

*2nd Wait.* Sir Harry Hardcastle, I tell you!

*1st Wait.* The Hammonds of Huntingdonshire.

*2nd Wait.* The Hardcastles of Hertfordshire.

*1st Wait.* The Hammonds.

*2nd Wait.* Don't tell me! does not Hardcastle begin with an H?

*1st Wait.* So does Hammond, for that matter.

*2nd Wait.* Faith, so it does, if you go to spell it. I did not think of that. I begin to be of your opinion; he is certainly a Hammond.

*1st Wait.* Here comes Susan Chambermaid, maybe she can tell.

*Enter* SUSAN.

*Both.* Well, Susan, have you heard anything who this strange gentleman is?

*Sus.* Haven't you heard? it's all come out; Mrs. Guesswell, the parson's widow, has been here about it. I overheard her talking in confidence to Mrs. Setter and Mrs. Pointer, and she says they were holding a sort of a *cummitty* about it.

*Both.* What? What?

*Sus.* There can't be a doubt of it, she says, what from his *figger* and the appearance he cuts, and his *sumpshous* way of living, and above all from the remarkable circumstance that his surname should begin with an H., that he must be——

*Both.* Well? Well?

*Sus.* Neither more nor less than the Prince——

*Both.* Prince!

*Sus.* The Prince of Hessy-Cassel in disguise.

*Both.* Very likely. Very likely.

*Sus.* Oh, there can't be a doubt on it. Mrs. Guesswell says she knows it.

*1st Wait.* Now, if we could be sure that the Prince of Hessy What-do-you-call-him was in England on his travels.

*2nd Wait.* Get a newspaper. Look in the newspapers.

*Sus.* Fiddle of the newspapers! who else can it be?

*Both.* That is very true (*gravely*).

*Enter* LANDLORD.

*Land.* Here—Susan! James! Philip! where are you all? The London coach is come in, and there is Mr. Fillaside, the fat passenger, has been bawling for somebody to help him off with his boots. (*The Chambermaid and Waiters slip out.*)

(*Solus.*) The house is turned upside down since the strange gentleman came into it. Nothing but guessing and speculating, and speculating and guessing; waiters and chambermaids getting into corners and speculating, ostlers and stable-boys speculating in the yard. I believe the very horses in the stable are speculating too, for there they stand in a musing posture, nothing for them to eat, and not seeming to care whether they have anything or no; and, after all, what does it signify? I hate such curious——odso, I must take this box up into his bedroom—he charged me to see to it myself—I hate such inquisitive—— I wonder what is in it?—it feels heavy. (*Reads*) "Leases, title-deeds, wills." Here, now, a man might satisfy his curiosity at once. Deeds must have names to them, so must leases and wills. But I wouldn't—no I wouldn't—— it is a pretty box too—prettily dovetailed. I admire the fashion of it much. But I'd cut my fingers off before I'd do such a dirty—what have I to do——curse the keys, how they rattle!—rattle in one's pockets—the keys and the halfpence (*takes out a bunch and plays with them*). I wonder if any of these would fit? One might just try them; but I wouldn't lift up the lid if they did. Oh no, what should I be the richer for knowing? (*All this time he tries the keys one by one.*) What's his name to me?—a thousand names begin with an H. I hate people that are always prying, poking and prying into things,—thrusting their finger into one place—a mighty little hole this—and their keys into another. O Lord! little rusty fits it! but what is that to me? I wouldn't go to—no, no—but it is odd little rusty should just happen—— (*While he is turning up the lid of the box*, MR. H. *enters behind him unperceived.*)

*Mr. H.* What are you about, you dog?

*Land.* O Lord, sir! pardon; no thief, as I hope to be saved. Little Pry was always honest.

*Mr. H.* What else could move you to open that box?

*Land.* Sir, don't kill me, and I will confess the whole truth. This box happened to be lying—that is, I happened to be carrying this box, and I happened to have my keys out, and so—little rusty happened to fit——

*Mr. H.* So little rusty happened to fit!—and would not a rope fit that rogue's neck? I see the papers have not been moved—all is safe; but it was as well to frighten him a little (*aside*). Come, Landlord, as I think you honest, and suspected you only intended to gratify a little foolish curiosity——

*Land.* That was all, sir, upon my veracity.

*Mr. H.* For this time I will pass it over. Your name is Pry, I think?

*Land.* Yes, sir, Jeremiah Pry, at your service.

*Mr. H.* An apt name; you have a prying temper;—I mean, some little curiosity—a sort of inquisitiveness about you.

*Land.* A natural thirst after knowledge you may call it, sir. When a boy, I was never easy but when I was thrusting up the lids of some of my school-fellows' boxes,—not to steal anything, upon my honour, sir,—only to see what was in them; have had pens stuck in my eyes for peeping through key-holes after knowledge; could never see a cold pie with the legs dangling out at top but my fingers were for lifting up the crust,—just to try if it were pigeon or partridge,—for no other reason in the world. Surely, I think, my passion for nuts was owing to the pleasure of cracking the shell to get at something concealed, more than to any delight I took in eating the kernel. In short, sir, this appetite has grown with my growth.

*Mr. H.* You will certainly be hanged some day for peeping into some bureau or other, just to see what is in it.

*Land.* That is my fear, sir. The thumps and kicks I have had for peering into parcels, and turning of letters inside out,—just for curiosity! The blankets I have been made to dance in for searching parish registers for old ladies' ages,—just for curiosity! Once I was dragged through a horse-pond, only for peeping into a closet that had glass doors to it, while my Lady Bluegarters was undressing,—just for curiosity!

*Mr. H.* A very harmless piece of curiosity, truly! And now, Mr. Pry, first have the goodness to leave that box with me, and then do me the favour to carry your curiosity so far as to inquire if my servants are within.

*Land.* I shall, sir. Here! David! Jonathan!—I think I hear them coming,—shall make bold to leave you, sir. [*Exit.*

*Mr. H.* Another tolerable specimen of the comforts of going anonymous!

*Enter two Footmen.*

*1st Foot.* You speak first.

*2nd Foot.* No, you had better speak.

*1st Foot.* You promised to begin.

*Mr. H.* They have something to say to me. The rascals want their wages raised, I suppose; there is always a favour to be asked when they come smiling. Well, poor rogues, service is but a hard bargain at the best. I think I must not be close with them. Well, David—well, Jonathan.

*1st Foot.* We have served your Honour faithfully——

*2nd Foot.* Hope your Honour won't take offence——

*Mr. H.* The old story, I suppose—wages?

*1st Foot.* That's not it, your Honour.

*2nd Foot.* You speak.

*1st Foot.* But if your Honour would just be pleased to——

*2nd Foot.* Only be pleased to——

*Mr. H.* Be quick with what you have to say, for I am in haste.

*1st Foot.* Just to——

*2nd Foot.* Let us know who it is——

*1st Foot.* Who it is we have the honour to serve.

*Mr. H.* Why, me, me, me! you serve me!

*2nd Foot.* Yes, sir; but we do not know who you are.

*Mr. H.* Childish curiosity! do not you serve a rich master, a gay master, an indulgent master?

*1st Foot.* Ah, sir! the figure you make is to us, your poor servants, the principal mortification.

*2nd Foot.* When we get over a pot at the public-house, or in a gentleman's kitchen, or elsewhere—as poor servants must have their pleasures—when the question goes round, who is your master? and who do you serve? and one says, I serve Lord So-and-so, and another, I am Squire Such-a-one's footman——

*1st Foot.* We have nothing to say for it, but that we serve Mr. H.

*2nd Foot.* Or Squire H.

*Mr. H.* Really you are a couple of pretty modest, reasonable personages; but I hope you will take it as no offence, gentlemen, if, upon a dispassionate review of all that you have said, I think fit not to tell you any more of my name than I have chosen, for especial purposes, to communicate to the rest of the world.

*1st Foot.* Why then, sir, you may suit yourself.

*2nd Foot.* We tell you plainly, we cannot stay.

*1st Foot.* We don't choose to serve Mr. H.

*2nd Foot.* Nor any Mr. or Squire in the alphabet——

*1st Foot.* That lives in Chris-cross Row.

*Mr. H.* Go, for a couple of ungrateful, inquisitive, senseless rascals! Go hang, starve, or drown! Rogues, to speak thus irreverently of the alphabet! I shall live to see you glad to serve old Q—to curl the wig of great S—adjust the dot of little i—stand behind the chair of X, Y, Z—wear the livery of Et-cætera —and ride behind the sulky of And-by-it-self-and! [*Exit in a rage.*

## ACT II.

SCENE.—*A handsome Apartment well lighted, Tea, Cards, &c.—A large Party of Ladies and Gentlemen, among them* MELESINDA.

*1st Lady.* I wonder when the charming man will be here!

*2nd Lady.* He is a delightful creature! Such a polish——

*3rd Lady.* Such an air in all that he does or says——

*4th Lady.* Yet gifted with a strong understanding——

*5th Lady.* But has your ladyship the remotest idea of what his true name is?

*1st Lady.* They say his very servants do not know it. His French valet, that has lived with him these two years——

*2nd Lady.* There, madam, I must beg leave to set you right: my coachman——

*1st Lady.* I have it from the very best authority, my footman——

*2nd Lady.* Then, madam, you have set your servants on——

*1st Lady.* No, madam, I would scorn any such little mean ways of coming at a secret. For my part, I don't think any secret of that consequence.

*2nd Lady.* That's just like me; I make a rule of troubling my head with nobody's business but my own.

*Mel.* But then she takes care to make everybody's business her own, and so to justify herself that way—— (*aside*).

*1st Lady.* My dear Melesinda, you look thoughtful.

*Mel.* Nothing.

*2nd Lady.* Give it a name.

*Mel.* Perhaps it is nameless.

*1st Lady.* As the object—— Come, never blush nor deny it, child. Bless me! what great ugly thing is that, that dangles at your bosom?

*Mel.* This? it is a cross: how do you like it?

*2nd Lady.* A cross! Well, to me it looks for all the world like a great staring H.! (*Here a general laugh.*)

*Mel.* Malicious creatures! Believe me, it is a cross, and nothing but a cross.

*1st Lady.* A cross, I believe, you would willingly hang at.

*Mel.* Intolerable spite! [MR. H. *is announced.*

*Enter* MR. H.

*1st Lady.* Oh, Mr. H., we are so glad——

*2nd Lady.* We have been so dull——

*3rd Lady.* So perfectly lifeless! You owe it to us to be more than commonly entertaining.

*Mr. H.* Ladies, this is so obliging——

*4th Lady.* Oh, Mr. H., those ranunculas you said were dying, pretty things! they have got up——

*5th Lady.* I have worked that sprig you commended. I want you to come——

*Mr. H.* Ladies——

*6th Lady.* I have sent for that piece of music from London.

*Mr. H.* The Mozart—(*seeing* MELESINDA)—Melesinda!

*Several Ladies at once.* Nay, positively, Melesinda, you shan't engross him all to yourself.

[*While the Ladies are pressing about* MR. H. *the Gentlemen show signs of displeasure.*

*1st Gent.* We shan't be able to edge in a word, now this coxcomb is come.

*2nd Gent.* Damn him! I will affront him.

*1st Gent.* Sir, with your leave, I have a word to say to one of these ladies.

*2nd Gent.* If we could be heard——

(*The Ladies pay no attention but to* MR. H.)

*Mr. H.* You see, gentlemen, how the matter stands. (*Hums an air.*) I am not my own master: positively, I exist and breathe but to be agreeable to these—— Did you speak?

*1st Gent.* And affects absence of mind, puppy!

*Mr. H.* Who spoke of absence of mind?—did you, madam? How do you do, Lady Wearwell—how do? I did not see your ladyship before. What was I about to say?—oh!—absence of mind. I am the most unhappy dog in that way—sometimes spurt out the strangest things—the most mal-à-propos—without meaning to give the least offence, upon my honour—sheer absence of mind—things I would have given the world not to have said.

*1st Gent.* Do you hear the coxcomb

*1st Lady.* Great wits, they say ·-

*2nd Lady.* Your fine geniuses are most given——

*3rd Lady.* Men of bright parts are commonly too vivacious——

*Mr. H.* But you shall hear. I was to dine the other day at a great Nabob's, that must be nameless, who, between ourselves, is strongly suspected of—being very rich, that's all. John, my valet, who knows my foible, cautioned me, while he was dressing me—as he usually does where he thinks there's a danger of my committing a *lapsus*—to take care in my conversation how I made any allusion, direct or indirect, to presents—you understand me? I set out double-charged with my fellow's consideration and my own, and, to do myself justice, behaved with tolerable circumspection for the first half-hour or so—till at last a gentleman in company, who was indulging a free vein of raillery at the expense of the ladies, stumbled upon that expression of the poet which calls them "fair defects."

*1st Lady.* It is Pope, I believe, who says it.

*Mr. H.* No, madam, Milton. Where was I? Oh, "fair defects." This gave occasion to a critic in company to deliver his opinion on the phrase—that led to an enumeration of all the various words which might have been used instead of "defect," as want, absence, poverty, deficiency, lack. This moment I, who had not been attending to the progress of the argument (as the dénoûment will show), starting suddenly up out of one of my reveries, by some unfortunate connection of ideas, which the last fatal word had excited, the devil put it into my head to turn round to the Nabob, who was sitting next me, and in a very marked manner (as it seemed to the company) to put the question to

him, "Pray, sir, what may be the exact value of a lac of rupees?" You may guess the confusion which followed.

*1st Lady.* What a distressing circumstance!

*2nd Lady.* To a delicate mind——

*3rd Lady.* How embarrassing——

*4th Lady.* I declare I quite pity you.

*1st Gent.* Puppy!

*Mr. H.* A Baronet at the table, seeing my dilemma, jogged my elbow; and a good-natured Duchess, who does everything with a grace peculiar to herself, trod on my toes at that instant: this brought me to myself, and—covered with blushes, and pitied by all the ladies—I withdrew.

*1st Lady.* How charmingly he tells a story!

*2nd Lady.* But how distressing!

*Mr. H.* Lord Squandercounsel, who is my particular friend, was pleased to rally me in his inimitable way upon it next day. I shall never forget a sensible thing he said on the occasion—speaking of absence of mind, my foible—says he, my dear Hogs——

*Several Ladies.* Hogs — what?—ha!

*Mr. H.* My dear Hogsflesh—my name—(*here an universal scream*)—Oh, my cursed unfortunate tongue!—H., I mean—Where was I?

*1st Lady.* Filthy!—abominable!

*2nd Lady.* Unutterable!

*3rd Lady.* Hogs——foh!

*4th Lady.* Disgusting!

*5th Lady.* Vile!

*6th Lady.* Shocking!

*1st Lady.* Odious!

*2nd Lady.* Hogs——pah!

*3rd Lady.* A smelling bottle—look to Miss Melesinda. Poor thing! it is no wonder. You had better keep off from her, Mr. Hogsflesh, and not be pressing about her in her circumstances.

*1st Gent.* Good time of day to you, Mr. Hogsflesh!

*2nd Gent.* The compliments of the season to you, Mr. Hogsflesh!

*Mr. H.* This is too much—flesh and blood cannot endure it.

*1st Gent.* What flesh?—hog's-flesh?

*2nd Gent.* How he sets up his bristles!

*Mr. H.* Bristles!

*1st. Gent.* He looks as fierce as a hog in armour.

*Mr. H.* A hog!——Madam!——(*here he severally accosts the Ladies, who by turns repel him*).

*1st Lady.* Extremely obliged to you for your attentions; but don't want a partner.

*2nd Lady.* Greatly flattered by your preference; but believe I shall remain single.

*3rd Lady.* Shall always acknowledge your politeness; but have no thoughts of altering my condition.

*4th Lady.* Always be happy to respect you as a friend; but you must not look for anything further.

*5th Lady.* No doubt of your ability to make any woman happy; but have no thoughts of changing my name.

*6th Lady.* Must tell you, sir, that if, by your insinuations, you think to prevail with me, you have got the wrong sow by the ear. Does he think any lady would go to pig with him?

*Old Lady.* Must beg you to be less particular in your addresses to me. Does he take me for a Jew, to long after forbidden meats?

*Mr. H.* I shall go mad!—to be refused by old Mother Damnable—she

that's so old, nobody knows whether she was ever married or no, but passes for a maid by courtesy; her juvenile exploits being beyond the farthest stretch of tradition!—old Mother Damnable!

[*Exeunt all, either pitying or seeming to avoid him.*

SCENE.—*The Street.* BELVIL *and another Gentleman.*

*Bel.* Poor Jack! I am really sorry for him. The account which you give me of his mortifying change of reception at the assembly would be highly diverting if it gave me less pain to hear it. With all his amusing absurdities, and amongst them—not the least—a predominant desire to be thought well of by the fair sex, he has an abundant share of good-nature, and is a man of honour. Notwithstanding all that has happened, Melesinda may do worse than take him yet. But did the women resent it so deeply as you say?

*Gent.* Oh, intolerably! They fled him as fearfully, when 'twas once blown, as a man would be avoided who was suddenly discovered to have marks of the plague, and as fast,—when before they had been ready to devour the foolishest thing he could say.

*Bel.* Ha! ha! so frail is the tenure by which these women's favourites commonly hold their envied pre-eminence! Well, I must go find him out and comfort him. I suppose I shall find him at the inn.

*Gent.* Either there or at Melesinda's. Adieu! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—MR. H——'S *Apartment.*

*Mr. H.* (*solus*). Was ever anything so mortifying? to be refused by old Mother Damnable!—with such parts and address, and the little squeamish devils to dislike me for a name—a sound!—Oh, my cursed name! that it was something I could be revenged on! if it were alive, that I might tread upon it, or crush it, or pummel it, or kick it, or spit it out—for it sticks in my throat and will choak me.

My plaguy ancestors! if they had left me but a Van or a Mac, or an Irish O', it had been something to qualify it.—Mynheer Van Hogsflesh,—or Sawney MacHogsflesh,—or Sir Phelim O'Hogsflesh,—but downright blunt——. If it had been any other name in the world, I could have borne it. If it had been the name of a beast, as Bull, Fox, Kid, Lamb, Wolf, Lion; or of a bird, as Sparrow, Hawk, Buzzard, Daw, Finch, Nightingale; or of a fish, as Sprat, Herring, Salmon; or the name of a thing, as Ginger, Hay, Wood; or of a colour, as Black, Gray, White, Green; or of a sound, as Bray; or the name of a month, as March, May; or of a place, as Barnet, Baldock, Hitchin; or the name of a coin, as Farthing, Penny, Twopenny; or of a profession, as Butcher, Baker, Carpenter, Piper, Fisher, Fletcher, Fowler, Glover; or a Jew's name, as Solomons, Isaacs, Jacobs; or a personal name, as Foot, Leg, Crookshanks, Heaviside, Sidebottom, Longbottom, Ramsbottom, Winterbottom; or a long name, as Blanchenhagen, or Blanchenhausen; or a short name, as Crib, Crisp, Crips, Tag, Trot, Tub, Phips, Padge, Papps, or Prig, or Wig, or Pip, or Trip; Trip had been something, but Ho——.

(*Walks about in great agitation,—recovering his calmness a little, sits down.*)

Farewell the most distant thoughts of marriage—the finger-circling ring, the purity-figuring glove, the envy-pining bridesmaids, the wishing parson, and the simpering clerk! Farewell the ambiguous blush-raising joke, the titter-provoking pun, the morning-stirring drum!—No son of mine shall exist to bear my ill-fated name! No nurse come chuckling to tell me it is a boy! No midwife, leering at me from under the lids of professional gravity! I dreamed of caudle (*sings in a melancholy tone*)—Lullaby, Lullaby,—hush-a-by-baby!—how like its papa it is!—(*makes motions as if he was nursing*). And then, when grown up, "Is this your son, sir?" "Yes, sir, a poor copy of me,—a

sad young dog!—just what his father was at his age. I have four more at home." Oh! oh! oh!

*Enter* LANDLORD.

*Mr. H.* Landlord, I must pack up to-night; you will see all my things got ready.

*Land.* Hope your Honour does not intend to quit the "Blue Boar,"—sorry anything has happened.

*Mr. H.* He has heard it all.

*Land.* Your Honour has had some mortification, to be sure, as a man may say; you have brought your pigs to a fine market.

*Mr. H.* Pigs!

*Land.* What then? take old Pry's advice, and never mind it. Don't scorch your crackling for 'em, sir.

*Mr. H.* Scorch my crackling!—a queer phrase; but I suppose he don't mean to affront me.

*Land.* What is done can't be undone; you can't make a silken purse out of a sow's ear.

*Mr. H.* As you say, landlord, thinking of a thing does but augment it.

*Land.* Does but *hogment* it, indeed, sir.

*Mr. H. Hogment* it!—damn it! I said augment it.

*Land.* Lord, sir, 'tis not everybody has such gift of fine phrases as your Honour, that can lard his discourse.

*Mr. H.* Lard!

*Land.* Suppose they do smoke you——

*Mr. H.* Smoke me?

*Land.* One of my phrases; never mind my words, sir, my meaning is good. We all mean the same thing, only you express yourself one way, and I another, that's all. The meaning's the same; it is all pork.

*Mr. H.* That's another of your phrases, I presume. (*Bell rings, and the landlord called for.*)

*Land.* Anon, anon.

*Mr. H.* Oh, I wish I were anonymous! [*Exeunt several ways.*

SCENE.—MELESINDA'S *Apartment.*

MELESINDA *and* MAID.

*Maid.* Lord, madam! before I'd take on as you do about a foolish—what signifies a name? Hogs—Hogs—what is it?—is just as good as any other, for what I see.

*Mel.* Ignorant creature! yet she is perhaps blest in the absence of those ideas which, while they add a zest to the few pleasures which fall to the lot of superior natures to enjoy, doubly edge the——

*Maid.* Superior natures!—a fig! If he's hog by name, he's not hog by nature—that don't follow; his name don't make him anything, does it? He don't grunt the more for it, nor squeak, that ever I hear; he likes his victuals out of a plate, as other Christians do; you never see him go to the trough——

*Mel.* Unfeeling wretch! yet possibly her intentions——

*Maid.* For instance, madam, my name is Finch—Betty Finch. I don't whistle the more for that, nor long after canary-seed while I can get good wholesome mutton—no, nor you can't catch me by throwing salt on my tail. If you come to that, hadn't I a young man used to come after me—they said courted me—his name was Lion—Francis Lion, a tailor; but though he was fond enough of me, for all that he never offered to eat me.

*Mel.* How fortunate that the discovery has been made before it was too

late! Had I listened to his deceits, and, as the perfidious man had almost persuaded me, precipitated myself into an inextricable engagement before——

*Maid.* No great harm if you had. You'd only have bought a pig in a poke—and what then? Oh, here he comes creeping——

*Enter* MR. H., *abject.*

Go to her, Mr. Hogs—Hogs—Hogsbristles—what's your name? Don't be afraid, man—don't give it up—she's not crying—only *summat* has made her eyes red—she has got a sty in her eye, I believe—(*going*).

*Mel.* You are not going, Betty?

*Maid.* Oh, madam, never mind me—I shall be back in the twinkling of a pig's whisker, as they say. [*Exit.*

*Mr. H.* Melesinda, you behold before you a wretch who would have betrayed your confidence, but it was love that prompted him; who would have tricked you by an unworthy concealment into a participation of that disgrace which a superficial world has agreed to attach to a name—but with it you would have shared a fortune not contemptible, and a heart—but 'tis over now. That name he is content to bear alone—to go where the persecuted syllables shall be no more heard, or excite no meaning—some spot where his native tongue has never penetrated, nor any of his countrymen have landed, to plant their unfeeling satire, their brutal wit, and national ill manners—where no Englishman—— (*Here* MELESINDA, *who has been pouting during this speech, fetches a deep sigh.*) Some yet undiscovered Otaheite, where witless, unapprehensive savages shall innocently pronounce the ill-fated sounds, and think them not inharmonious.

*Mel.* Oh!

*Mr. H.* Who knows but among the female natives might be found——

*Mel.* Sir! (*raising her head*).

*Mr. H.* One who would be more kind than—some Oberea—Queen Oberea.

*Mel.* Oh!

*Mr. H.* Or what if I were to seek for proofs of reciprocal esteem among unprejudiced African maids in Monomotopa?

*Enter* SERVANT.

*Serv.* Mr. Belvil [*Exit.*

*Enter* BELVIL.

*Mr. H.* In Monomotopa (*musing*).

*Bel.* Heyday, Jack! what means this mortified face? nothing has happened, I hope, between this lady and you? I beg pardon, madam, but understanding my friend was with you, I took the liberty of seeking him here. Some little difference possibly which a third person can adjust—not a word—will you, madam, as this gentleman's friend, suffer me to be the arbitrator—strange!—hark'ee, Jack, nothing has come out, has there?—you understand me. Oh, I guess how it is—somebody has got at your secret. You haven't blabbed it yourself, have you?—ha! ha! ha! I could find in my heart—Jack, what would you give me if I should relieve you——

*Mr. H.* No power of man can relieve me (*sighs*), but it must lie at the root—gnawing at the root—here it will lie.

*Bel.* No power of man?—not a common man, I grant you; for instance, a subject—it's out of the power of any subject.

*Mr. H.* Gnawing at the root—there it will lie.

*Bel.* Such a thing has been known as a name to be changed; but not by a subject—(*shows a Gazette*).

*Mr. H.* Gnawing at the root (*suddenly snatches the paper out of* BELVIL'S *hand*); ha! pish! nonsense! give it me—what! (*reads*) promotions, bankrupts

—a great many bankrupts this week—there it will lie (*lays it down, takes it up again, and reads*)—"The King has been graciously pleased"—gnawing at the root—"graciously pleased to grant unto John Hogsflesh"—the devil—"Hogsflesh, Esq., of Sty Hall, in the county of Hants, his royal license and authority"—O Lord! O Lord!—"that he and his issue"—me and my issue—"may take and use the surname and arms of Bacon"—Bacon, the surname and arms of Bacon!—"in pursuance of an injunction contained in the last will and testament of Nicholas Bacon, Esq., his late uncle, as well as out of grateful respect to his memory:"—grateful respect, poor old soul!——here's more—"and that such arms may be first duly exemplified"—they shall, I will take care of that —"according to the laws of arms, and recorded in the Heralds' Office."

*Bel.* Come, madam, give me leave to put my own interpretation upon your silence, and to plead for my friend, that now that only obstacle which seemed to stand in the way of your union is removed, you will suffer me to complete the happiness which my news seems to have brought him, by introducing him with a new claim to your favour, by the name of Mr. Bacon. (*Takes their hands and joins them, which* MELESINDA *seems to give consent to with a smile.*)

*Mr. H.* Generous Melesinda!—my dear friend—"he and his issue,"—me and my issue—O Lord!

*Bel.* I wish you joy, Jack, with all my heart!

*Mr. H.* Bacon, Bacon, Bacon—how odd it sounds! I could never be tired of hearing it. There was Lord Chancellor Bacon. Methinks I have some of the Verulam blood in me already—methinks I could look through Nature—there was Friar Bacon, a conjurer—I feel as if I could conjure too——

*Enter a* SERVANT.

*Serv.* Two young ladies and an old lady are at the door, inquiring if you see company, madam.

*Mr. H.* "Surname and arms"——

*Mel.* Show them up.—My dear Mr. Bacon, moderate your joy!

*Enter three Ladies, being part of those who were at the assembly.*

*1st Lady.* My dear Melesinda, how do you do?

*2nd Lady.* How do you do? We have been so concerned for you——

*Old Lady.* We have been so concerned—(*seeing him*)—Mr. Hogsflesh——

*Mr. H.* There's no such person—nor there never was—nor 'tis not fit there should be—"surname and arms"—

*Bel.* It is true what my friend would express; we have been all in a mistake, ladies. Very true, the name of this gentleman was what you call it, but it is so no longer. The succession to the long-contested Bacon estate is at length decided, and with it my friend succeeds to the name of his deceased relative.

*Mr. H.* "His Majesty has been graciously pleased"——

*1st Lady.* I am sure we all join in hearty congratulation—(*sighs*).

*2nd Lady.* And wish you joy with all our hearts—(*heighho!*).

*Old Lady.* And hope you will enjoy the name and estate many years—(*cries*).

*Bel.* Ha! ha! ha! mortify them a little, Jack.

*1st Lady.* Hope you intend to stay——

*2nd Lady.* With us some time——

*Old Lady.* In these parts.

*Mr. H.* Ladies, for your congratulations I thank you; for the favours you have lavished on me, and in particular for this lady's (*turning to the old Lady*) good opinion, I rest your debtor. As to any future favours—(*accosts them severally in the order in which he was refused by them at the assembly*)—

Madam, shall always acknowledge your politeness; but at present, you see, I am engaged with a partner. Always be happy to respect you as a friend, but you must not look for anything further. Must beg of you to be less particular in your addresses to me. Ladies all, with this piece of advice, of Bath and you,—

Your ever grateful servant takes his leave.
Lay your plans surer when you plot to grieve:
See, while you kindly mean to mortify
Another, the wild arrow do not fly,
And gall yourself. For once you've been mistaken;
Your shafts have miss'd their aim—Hogsflesh has saved his Bacon!

# The Wife's Trial;

## OR, THE INTRUDING WIDOW.

*A Dramatic Poem, founded on George Crabbe's Tale of "The Confidant."*

(*Blackwood's Magazine*, December, 1828.)

[A couple of years after its appearance in Maga, "The Wife's Trial" was reissued among the "Few other Poems" appended to the Author's "Album Verses."]

CHARACTERS.

MR. SELBY, *a Wiltshire Gentleman.*
KATHERINE, *Wife to Selby.*
LUCY, *Sister to Selby.*
MRS. FRAMPTON, *a Widow.*
SERVANTS.

SCENE.—*At* MR. SELBY'S *House, or in the Grounds adjacent.*

SCENE.—*A Library.* MR. SELBY, KATHERINE.

*Selby.* Do not too far mistake me, gentlest wife;
I meant to chide your virtues, not yourself,
And those too with allowance. I have not
Been blest by thy fair side with five white years
Of smooth and even wedlock, now to touch
With any strain of harshness on a string
Hath yielded me such music. 'Twas the quality
Of a too grateful nature in my Katherine,
That to the lame performance of some vows,
And common courtesies of man to wife,
Attributing too much, hath sometimes seem'd
To esteem as favours, what in that blest union
Are but reciprocal and trivial dues,
As fairly yours as mine: 'twas this I thought
Gently to reprehend.

*Kath.* In friendship's barter
The riches we exchange should hold some level,
And corresponding worth. Jewels for toys
Demand some thanks thrown in. You took me, sir,
To that blest haven of my peace, your bosom,
An orphan founder'd in the world's black storm
Poor, you have made me rich; from lonely maiden,
Your cherish'd and your full-accompanied wife.
*Selby.* But to divert the subject: Kate, too fond
I would not wrest your meanings; else that word
Accompanied, and full-accompanied too,
Might raise a doubt in some men, that their wives
Haply did think their company too long;
And over-company, we know by proof,
Is worse than no attendance.
*Kath.* I must guess,
You speak this of the Widow——
*Selby.* 'Twas a bolt
At random shot; but if it hit, believe me,
I am most sorry to have wounded you
Through a friend's side. I know not how we have swerved
From our first talk. I was to caution you
Against this fault of a too grateful nature:
Which, for some girlish obligations past,
In that relenting season of the heart,
When slightest favours pass for benefits
Of endless binding, would entail upon you
An iron slavery of obsequious duty
To the proud will of an imperious woman.
*Kath.* The favours are not slight to her I owe.
*Selby.* Slight or not slight, the tribute she exacts
Cancels all dues—— (*A voice within.*)
Even now I hear her call you
In such a tone as lordliest mistresses
Expect a slave's attendance. Prithee, Kate,
Let her expect a brace of minutes or so.
Say, you are busy. Use her by degrees
To some less hard exactions.
*Kath.* I conjure you,
Detain me not. I will return——
*Selby.* Sweet wife,
Use thy own pleasure— [*Exit* KATHERINE.
but it troubles me.
A visit of three days, as was pretended,
Spun to ten tedious weeks, and no hint given
When she will go! I would this buxom Widow
Were a thought handsomer! I'd fairly try
My Katherine's constancy; make desperate love
In seeming earnest; and raise up such broils,
That she, not I, should be the first to warn
The insidious guest depart.

*Re-enter* KATHERINE.

So soon return'd!
What was our Widow's will?
*Kath.* A trifle, sir.

*Selby.* Some toilet service—to adjust her head,
Or help to stick a pin in the right place——
*Kath.* Indeed 'twas none of these.
*Selby.* Or new vamp up
The tarnish'd cloak she came in. I have seen her
Demand such service from thee, as her maid,
Twice told to do it, would blush angry-red.
And pack her few clothes up. Poor fool! fond slave!
And yet my dearest Kate!—This day at least
(It is our wedding day), we spend in freedom,
And will forget our Widow.—Philip, our coach—
Why weeps my wife? You know, I promised you
An airing o'er the pleasant Hampshire downs
To the blest cottage on the green hill-side
Where first I told my love. I wonder much
If the crimson parlour hath exchanged its hue
For colours not so welcome. Faded though
It be,
It will not show less lovely than the tinge
Of this faint red, contending with the pale,
Where once the full-flush'd health gave to this cheek
An apt resemblance to the fruit's warm side
That bears my Katherine's name.—
Our carriage, Philip.

*Enter a Servant.*

Now, Robin, what make you here?
*Serv.* May it please you,
The coachman has driven out with Mistress Frampton.
*Selby.* He had no orders——
*Serv.* None, sir, that I know of,
But from the lady, who expects some letters
At the next post town.
*Selby.* Go, Robin. [*Exit Servant.*
How is this?
*Kath.* I came to tell you so, but fear'd your anger——
*Selby.* It was ill done, though, of this Mistress Frampton—
This forward Widow. But a ride's poor loss
Imports not much. In to your chamber, love,
Where you with music may beguile the hour,
While I am tossing over dusty tomes,
'Till our most reasonable friend returns.
*Kath.* I am all obedience. [*Exit* KATHERINE.
*Selby.* Too obedient, Kate,
And to too many masters. I can hardly,
On such a day as this, refrain to speak
My sense of this injurious friend—this pest—
This household evil—this close-clinging fiend—
In rough terms to my wife. 'Death, my own servants
Controll'd above me! orders countermanded!
What next?
[*Servant enters and announces the Sister.*

*Enter* LUCY.

Sister! I know you are come to welcome
This day's return. 'Twas well done.

*Lucy.* You seem ruffled.
In years gone by this day was used to be
The smoothest of the year. Your honey turn'd
So soon to gall?

*Selby.* Gall'd am I, and with cause,
And rid to death, yet cannot get a riddance,
Nay, scarce a ride, by this proud Widow's leave.

*Lucy.* Something you wrote me of a Mistress Frampton.

*Selby.* She came at first a meek admitted guest,
Pretending a short stay; her whole deportment
Seem'd as of one obliged. A slender trunk,
The wardrobe of her scant and ancient clothing,
Bespoke no more. But in few days her dress,
Her looks, were proudly changed. And now she flaunts it
In jewels stolen or borrow'd from my wife;
Who owes her some strange service, of what nature
I must be kept in ignorance. Katherine's meek
And gentle spirit cowers beneath her eye,
As spell-bound by some witch.

*Lucy.* Some mystery hangs on it.
How bears she in her carriage towards yourself?

*Selby* As one who fears, and yet not greatly cares
For my displeasure. Sometimes I have thought
A secret glance would tell me she could love,
If I but gave encouragement. Before me
She keeps some moderation; but is never
Closeted with my wife, but in the end
I find my Katherine in briny tears.
From the small chamber where she first was lodged,
The gradual fiend, by specious wriggling arts,
Has now ensconced herself in the best part
Of this large mansion; calls the left wing her own;
Commands my servants, equipage.—I hear
Her hated tread. What makes she back so soon?

*Enter* MRS. FRAMPTON.

*Mrs. F.* O, I am jolter'd, bruised, and shook to death
With your vile Wiltshire roads. The villain Philip
Chose, on my conscience, the perversest tracks
And stoniest hard lanes in all the county,
Till I was fain get out, and so walk back,
My errand unperform'd at Andover.

*Lucy.* And I shall love the knave for't ever after (*aside*).

*Mrs. F.* A friend with you!

*Selby.* My eldest sister Lucy,
Come to congratulate this returning morn.—
Sister, my wife's friend, Mistress Frampton.

*Mrs. F.* Pray,
Be seated. For your brother's sake, you are welcome.
I had thought this day to have spent in homely fashion
With the good couple, to whose hospitality
I stand so far indebted. But your coming
Makes it a feast.

*Lucy.* She does the honours naturally—— } (*aside*).
*Selby.* As if she were the mistress of the house— }

*Mrs. F.* I love to be at home with loving friends.

To stand on ceremony with obligations,
Is to restrain the obliger. That old coach, though,
Of yours jumbles one strangely.
*Selby.* I shall order
An equipage soon, more easy to you, madam——
*Lucy.* To drive her and her pride to Lucifer,
I hope he means (*aside*).
*Mrs. F.* I must go trim myself; this humbled garb
Would shame a wedding feast. I have your leave
For a short absence?—and your Katherine——
*Selby.* You'll find her in her closet——
*Mrs. F.* Fare you well, then. [*Exit.*
*Selby.* How like you her assurance?
*Lucy.* Even so well,
That if this Widow were my guest, not yours,
She should have coach enough, and scope to ride.
My merry groom should in a trice convey her
To Sarum Plain, and set her down at Stonehenge,
To pick her path through those antiques at leisure·
She should take sample of our Wiltshire flints.
O, be not lightly jealous! nor surmise
That to a wanton bold-faced thing like this
Your modest shrinking Katherine could impart
Secrets of any worth, especially
Secrets that touch'd your peace. If there be aught,
My life upon't, 'tis but some girlish story
Of a first love; which even the boldest wife
Might modestly deny to a husband's ear,
Much more your timid and too sensitive Katherine.
*Selby.* I think it is no more; and will dismiss
My further fears, if ever I have had such.
*Lucy.* Shall we go walk? I'd see your gardens, brother;
And how the new trees thrive I recommended.
Your Katherine is engaged now——
*Selby.* I'll attend you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*Servants' Hall.*

*Housekeeper*, PHILIP, *and others, laughing.*

*Houseк.* Our lady's guest, since her short ride, seems ruffled,
And somewhat in disorder. Philip, Philip,
I do suspect some roguery. Your mad tricks
Will some day cost you a good place, I warrant.
*Phil.* Good Mistress Jane, our serious housekeeper,
And sage duenna to the maids and scullions,
We must have leave to laugh; our brains are younger,
And undisturb'd with care of keys and pantries.
We are wild things.
*Butler.* Good Philip, tell us all.
*All.* Ay, as you live, tell, tell——
*Phil.* Mad fellows, you shall have it.
The Widow's bell rang lustily and loud——
*Butl.* I think that no one can mistake her ringing.
*Waiting-maid.* Our lady's ring is soft sweet music to it,
More of entreaty hath it than command.
*Phil.* I lose my story, if you interrupt thus.

The bell, I say, rang fiercely; and a voice
More shrill than bell call'd out for "Coachman Philip."
I straight obey'd, as 'tis my name and office.
"Drive me," quoth she, "to the next market town,
Where I have hope of letters." I made haste,
Put to the horses, saw her fairly coach'd,
And drove her ——
*Waiting-maid.* ——By the straight high road to Andover,
I guess ——
*Phil.* Pray, warrant things within your knowledge,
Good Mistress Abigail; look to your dressings,
And leave the skill in horses to the coachman.
*Butl.* He'll have his humour; best not interrupt him.
*Phil.* 'Tis market-day, thought I; and the poor beasts,
Meeting such droves of cattle and of people,
May take a fright; so down the lane I trundled,
Where Goodman Dobson's crazy mare was founder'd,
And where the flints were biggest, and ruts widest.
By ups and downs, and such bone-cracking motions,
We flounder'd on a furlong, till my madam,
In policy to save the few joints left her,
Betook her to her feet, and there we parted.
*All.* Ha! ha! ha!
*Butl.* Hang her! 'tis pity such as she should ride.
*Waiting-maid.* I think she is a witch; I have tired myself out
With sticking pins in her pillow; still she 'scapes them.
*Butl.* And I with helping her to mum for claret,
But never yet could cheat her dainty palate.
*Housek.* Well, well, she is the guest of our good mistress,
And so should be respected. Though, I think,
Our master cares not for her company,
He would ill brook we should express so much
By rude discourtesies and short attendance,
Being but servants. (*A bell rings furiously.*) 'Tis her bell speaks now;
Good, good, bestir yourselves: who knows who's wanted?
*Butl.* But 'twas a merry trick of Philip Coachman. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*Mrs. Selby's Chamber.*

MRS. FRAMPTON, KATHERINE, *working.*

*Mrs. F.* I am thinking, child, how contrary our fates
Have traced our lots through life. Another needle,
This works untowardly. An heiress born
To splendid prospects, at our common school
I was as one above you all, not of you;
Had my distinct prerogatives, my freedoms,
Denied to you. Pray, listen——
*Kath.* I must hear
What you are pleased to speak!—How my heart sinks here! (*aside*).
*Mrs. F.* My chamber to myself, my separate maid,
My coach, and so forth.—Not that needle, simple one,
With the great staring eye fit for a Cyclops!
Mine own are not so blinded with their griefs,
But I could make a shift to thread a smaller.
A cable or a camel might go through this,
And never strain for the passage.

*Kath.* I will fit you.—
Intolerable tyranny! (*aside*).
*Mrs. F.* Quick! quick!
You were not once so slack.—As I was saying,
Not a young thing among ye but observed me
Above the mistress. Who but I was sought to
In all your dangers, all your little difficulties,
Your girlish scrapes? I was the scape-goat still,
To fetch you off; kept all your secrets; some,
Perhaps, since then ——
*Kath.* No more of that, for mercy,
If you'd not have me, sinking at your feet,
Cleave the cold earth for comfort (*kneels*).
*Mrs. F.* This to me?
This posture to your friend had better suited
The orphan Katherine in her humble school-days,
To the *then* rich heiress, than the wife of Selby—
Of wealthy Mr. Selby—
To the poor Widow Frampton, sunk as she is.
Come, come,
'Twas something, or 'twas nothing, that I said;
I did not mean to fright you, sweetest bed-fellow!
You once were so, but Selby now engrosses you.
I'll make him give you up a night or so—
In faith I will—that we may lie and talk
Old tricks of school-days over.
*Kath.* Hear me, madam——
*Mrs. F.* Not by that name. Your friend——
*Kath.* My truest friend,
And saviour of my honour!
*Mrs. F.* This sounds better;
You still shall find me such.
*Kath.* That you have graced
Our poor house with your presence hitherto,
Has been my greatest comfort, the sole solace
Of my forlorn and hardly guess'd estate.
You have been pleased
To accept some trivial hospitalities,
In part of payment of a long arrear
I owe to you, no less than for my life.
*Mrs. F.* You speak my services too large.
*Kath.* Nay, less;
For what an abject thing were life to me
Without your silence on my dreadful secret!
And I would wish the league we have renew'd
Might be perpetual——
*Mrs. F.* Have a care, fine madam! (*aside*).
*Kath.* That one house still might hold us. But my husband
Has shown himself of late ——
*Mrs. F.* How, Mistress Selby?
*Kath.* Not—not impatient. You misconstrue him.
He honours, and he loves—nay, he must love—
The friend of his wife's youth. But there are moods
In which ——
*Mrs. F.* I understand you;—in which husbands,
And wives that love, may wish to be alone,

To nurse the tender fits of new-born dalliance,
After a five years' wedlock.
*Kath.* Was that well
Or charitably put? do these pale cheeks
Proclaim a wanton blood? this wasting form
Seem a fit theatre for levity
To play his love-tricks on; and act such follies,
As even in affection's first bland moon
Have less of grace than pardon in best wedlocks?
I was about to say that there are times
When the most frank and sociable man
May surfeit on most loved society,
Preferring loneness rather---
*Mrs. F.* To my company——
*Kath.* Ay, yours, or mine, or any one's. Nay, take
Not this unto yourself. Even in the newness
Of our first married loves 'twas sometimes so.
For solitude, I have heard my Selby say,
Is to the mind as rest to the corporal functions;
And he would call it oft, the *day's soft sleep.*
*Mrs. F.* What is your drift? and whereto tends this speech,
Rhetorically labour'd?
*Kath.* That you would
Abstain but from our house a month, a week:
I make request but for a single day.
*Mrs. F.* A month, a week, a day! A single hour
Is every week, and month, and the long year,
And all the years to come! My footing here,
Slipt once, recovers never. From the state
Of gilded roofs, attendance, luxuries,
Parks, gardens, sauntering walks, or wholesome rides,
To the bare cottage on the withering moor,
Where I myself am servant to myself,
Or only waited on by blackest thoughts,
I sink, if this be so. No; here I sit.
*Kath.* Then I am lost for ever! [*Sinks at her feet—curtain drops.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment contiguous to the last.*

SELBY, *as if listening.*

*Selby.* The sounds have died away. What am I changed to?
What do I here, listening like to an abject
Or heartless wittol, that must hear no good,
If he hear aught? "This shall to the ear of your husband."
It was the Widow's word. I guess'd some mystery,
And the solution with a vengeance comes.
What can my wife have left untold to me
That must be told by proxy? I begin
To call in doubt the course of her life past
Under my very eyes. She hath not been good,
Not virtuous, not discreet; she hath not outrun
My wishes still with prompt and meek observance.
Perhaps she is not fair, sweet-voiced; her eyes
Not like the dove's; all this as well may be
As that she should entreasure up a secret
In the peculiar closet of her breast,

And grudge it to my ear. It is my right
To claim the halves in any truth she owns,
As much as in the babe I have by her:
Upon whose face henceforth I fear to look,
Lest I should fancy in its innocent brow
Some strange shame written.

*Enter* LUCY.

Sister, an anxious word with you.
From out that chamber, where my wife but now
Held talk with her encroaching friend, I heard
(Not of set purpose hearkening, but by chance)
A voice of chiding, answer'd by a tone
Of replication such as the meek dove
Makes when the kite has clutch'd her. The high Widow
Was loud and stormy. I distinctly heard
One threat pronounced—"Your husband shall know all."
I am no listener, sister; and I ho'd
A secret got by such unmanly shift,
The pitiful'st of thefts; but what mine ear,
I not intending it, receives perforce,
I count my lawful prize. Some subtle meaning
Lurks in this fiend's behaviour; which, by force
Or fraud, I must make mine.

*Lucy.* The gentlest means
Are still the wisest. What if you should press
Your wife to a disclosure?

*Selby.* I have tried
All gentler means; thrown out low hints, which, though
Merely suggestions still, have never fail'd
To blanch her cheek with fears. Roughlier to insist
Would be to kill, where I but meant to heal.

*Lucy.* Your own description gave that Widow out
As one not much precise, nor over coy
And nice to listen to a suit of love.
What if you feign'd a courtship, putting on
(To work the secret from her easy faith),
For honest ends, a most dishonest seeming?

*Selby.* I see your drift, and partly meet your counsel.
But must it not in me appear prodigious—
To say the least, unnatural and suspicious—
To move hot love where I have shown cool scorn,
And undissembled looks of blank aversion?

*Lucy.* Vain woman is the dupe of her own charms,
And easily credits the resistless power
That in besieging beauty lies, to cast down
The slight-built fortress of a casual hate.

*Selby.* I am resolved——

*Lucy.* Success attend your wooing!

*Selby.* And I'll about it roundly, my wise sister. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*The Library.*

MR. SELBY. MRS. FRAMPTON.

*Selby.* A fortunate encounter, Mistress Frampton.
My purpose was, if you can spare so much
From your sweet leisure, a few words in private.

*Mrs. F.* What mean his alter'd tones? These looks to me,
Whose glances yet he has repell'd with coolness?
Is the wind changed? I'll veer about with it,
And meet him in all fashions (*aside*).
All my leisure,
Feebly bestow'd upon my kind friends here,
Would not express a tithe of the obligements
I every hour incur.
*Selby.* No more of that.—
I know not why my wife hath lost of late
Much of her cheerful spirits.
*Mrs. F.* It was my topic
To-day; and every day, and all day long,
I still am chiding with her. "Child," I said,
And said it pretty roundly—it may be
I was too peremptory—we elder school-fellows,
Presuming on the advantage of a year
Or two, which, in that tender time, seem'd much,
In after years, much like to elder sisters,
Are prone to keep the authoritative style,
When time has made the difference most ridiculous.

*Selby.* The observation's shrewd.

*Mrs. F.* "Child," I was saying,
"If some wives had obtain'd a lot like yours,"
And then perhaps I sigh'd, "they would not sit
In corners moping, like to sullen n oppets,
That want their will, but dry their eyes, and look
Their cheerful husbands in the face,"—perhaps
I said, their Selbys,—"with proportion'd looks
Of honest joy."

*Selby.* You do suspect no jealousy?

*Mrs. F.* What is his import? Whereto tends his speech? (*aside*).
Of whom, or what, should she be jealous, sir?
*Selby.* I do not know; but women have their fancies;
And underneath a cold indifference,
Or show of some distaste, husbands have mask'd
A growing fondness for a female friend,
Which the wife's eye was sharp enough to see
Before the friend had wit to find it out.
You do not quit us soon?
*Mrs. F.* 'Tis as I find
Your Katherine profits by my lesson, sir.—
Means this man honest? Is there no deceit? (*aside*).
*Selby.* She cannot choose.—Well, well, I have been thinking,
And if the matter were to do again——
*Mrs. F.* What matter, sir?
*Selby.* This idle bond of wedlock;
These sour-sweet briars, fetters of harsh silk;
I might have made, I do not say a better,
But a more fit choice in a wife.
*Mrs. F.* The parch'd ground,
In hottest Julys, drinks not in the showers
More greedily than I his words! (*aside*).
*Selby.* My humour
Is to be frank and jovial; and that man

Affects me best, who most reflects me in
My most free temper.
*Mrs. F.* Were you free to choose,
As jestingly I'll put the supposition,
Without a thought reflecting on your Katherine,
What sort of woman would you make your choice?
*Selby.* I like your humour, and will meet your jest.
She should be one about my Katherine's age;
But not so old, by some ten years, in gravity.
One that would meet my mirth, sometimes outrun it;
No puling, pining moppet, as you said,
Nor moping maid, that I must still be teaching
The freedoms of a wife all her life after;
But one that, having worn the chain before
(And worn it lightly, as report gave out),
Enfranchised from it by her poor fool's death,
Took it not so to heart that I need dread
To die myself, for fear a second time
To wet a widow's eye.
*Mrs. F.* Some widows, sir,
Hearing you talk so wildly, would be apt
To put strange misconstruction on your words,
As aiming at a Turkish liberty,
Where the free husband hath his several mates;
His Penseroso, his Allegro wife,
To suit his sober, or his frolic fit.
*Selby.* How judge you of that latitude?
*Mrs. F.* As one,
In European customs bred, must judge. Had I
Been born a native of the liberal East,
I might have thought as they do. Yet I knew
A married man that took a second wife,
And (the man's circumstances duly weigh'd,
With all their bearings) the considerate world
Nor much approved, nor much condemn'd the deed.
*Selby.* You move my wonder strangely. Pray, proceed.
*Mrs. F.* An eye of wanton liking he had placed
Upon a widow, who liked him again,
But stood on terms of honourable love,
And scrupled wronging his most virtuous wife;
When to their ears a lucky rumour ran,
That this demure and saintly-seeming wife
Had a first husband living; with the which
Being question'd, she but faintly could deny.
"A priest indeed there was; some words had past,
But scarce amounting to a marriage rite.
Her friend was absent; she supposed him dead;
And, seven years parted, both were free to choose."
*Selby.* What did the indignant husband? Did he not
With violent handlings stigmatize the cheek
Of the deceiving wife, who had entail'd
Shame on their innocent babe?
*Mrs. F.* He neither tore
His wife's locks nor his own; but wisely weighing
His own offence with hers in equal poise,
And woman's weakness 'gainst the strength of man,

Came to a calm and witty compromise.
He coolly took his gay-faced widow home,
Made her his second wife; and still the first
Lost few or none of her prerogatives.
The servants call'd her mistress still; she kept
The keys, and had the total ordering
Of the house affairs; and, some slight toys excepted,
Was all a moderate wife would wish to be.
*Selby.* A tale full of dramatic incident!—
And, if a man should put it in a play,
How should he name the parties?
*Mrs. F.* The man's name
Through time I have forgot—the widow's too;—
But his first wife's first name, her maiden one,
Was—not unlike to *that* your Katherine bore,
Before she took the honour'd style of Selby.
*Selby.* A dangerous meaning in your riddle lurks;
One knot is yet unsolved; that told, this strange
And most mysterious drama ends. The name
Of that first husband——

*Enter* LUCY.

*Mrs. F.* Sir, your pardon.
The allegory fits your private ear.
Some half-hour hence, in the garden's secret walk,
We shall have leisure. [*Exit.*
*Selby.* Sister, whence come you?
*Lucy.* From your poor Katherine's chamber, where she droops
In sad presageful thoughts, and sighs, and weeps,
And seems to pray by turns. At times she looks
As she would pour her secret in my bosom—
Then starts, as I have seen her, at the mention
Of some immodest act. At her request,
I left her on her knees.
*Selby.* The fittest posture;
For great has been her fault to Heaven and me.
She married me with a first husband living,
Or not known not to be so, which, in the judgment
Of any but indifferent honesty,
Must be esteem'd the same. The shallow Widow,
Caught by my art, under a riddling veil
Too thin to hide her meaning, hath confess'd all.
Your coming in broke off the conference,
When she was ripe to tell the fatal *name*
That seals my wedded doom.
*Lucy.* Was she so forward
To pour her hateful meanings in your ear
At the first hint?
*Selby.* Her newly-flattered hopes
Array'd themselves at first in forms of doubt;
And with a female caution she stood off
Awhile, to read the meaning of my suit,
Which with such honest seeming I enforced,
That her cold scruples soon gave way; and now
She rests prepared, as mistress, or as wife,

To seize the place of her betrayèd friend –
My much offending, but more suffering Katherine.
*Lucy.* Into what labyrinth of fearful shapes
My simple project has conducted you!
Were but my wit as skilful to invent
A clue to lead you forth!—I call to mind
A letter, which your wife received from the Cape,
Soon after you were married, with some circumstances
Of mystery too.
*Selby.* I well remember it.
That letter did confirm the truth (she said)
Of a friend's death, which she had long fear'd true,
But knew not for a fact. A youth of promise
She gave him out—a hot adventurous spirit—
That had set sail in quest of golden dreams,
And cities in the heart of Central Afric;
But named no names, nor did I care to press
My question further, in the passionate grief
She show'd at the receipt. Might this be he?
*Lucy.* Tears were not all. When that first shower was past,
With claspèd hands she raised her eyes to Heaven,
As if in thankfulness for some escape,
Or strange deliverance, in the news implied,
Which sweeten'd that sad news.
*Selby.* Something of that
I noted also——
*Lucy.* In her closet once,
Seeking some other trifle, I espied
A ring, in mournful characters deciphering
The death of "Robert Halford, aged two
And twenty." Brother, I am not given
To the confident use of wagers, which I hold
Unseemly in a woman's argument;
But I am strangely tempted now to risk
A thousand pounds out of my patrimony
(And let my future husband look to it,
If it be lost), that this immodest Widow
Shall name the name that tallies with that ring.
*Selby.* That wager lost, I should be rich indeed—
Rich in my rescued Kate—rich in my honour,
Which now was bankrupt. Sister, I accept
Your merry wager, with an aching heart
For very fear of winning. 'Tis the hour
That I should meet my Widow in the walk,
The south side of the garden. On some pretence
Lure forth my wife that way, that she may witness
Our seeming courtship. Keep us still in sight,
Yourselves unseen; and by some sign I'll give
(A finger held up, or a kerchief waved),
You'll know your wager won—then break upon us,
As if by chance.
*Lucy.* I apprehend your meaning——
*Selby.* And may you prove a true Cassandra here,
Though my poor acres smart for't, wagering sister. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*Mrs. Selby's Chamber.*

MRS. FRAMPTON. KATHERINE.

*Mrs. F.* Did I express myself in terms so strong?
*Kath.* As nothing could have more affrighted me.
*Mrs. F.* Think it a hurt friend's jest, in retribution
Of a suspected cooling hospitality.
And, for my staying here, or going hence
(Now I remember something of our argument),
Selby and I can settle that between us.
You look amazed. What if your husband, child,
Himself has courted me to stay?
*Kath.* You move
My wonder and my pleasure equally.
*Mrs. F.* Yes, courted me to stay, waived all objections,
Made it a favour to yourselves; not me,
His troublesome guest, as you surmised. Child, child,
When I recall his flattering welcome, I
Begin to think the burden of my presence
Was——
*Kath.* What, for Heaven——
*Mrs. F.* A little, little spice
Of jealousy—that's all—an honest pretext,
No wife need blush for. Say that you should see,
(As oftentimes we widows take such freedoms,
Yet still on this side virtue,) in a jest
Your husband pat me on the cheek, or steal
A kiss, while you were by,—not else, for virtue's sake.
*Kath.* I could endure all this, thinking my husband
Meant it in sport——
*Mrs. F.* But if in downright earnest
(Putting myself out of the question here)
Your Selby, as I partly do suspect,
Own'd a divided heart——
*Kath.* My own would break——
*Mrs. F.* Why, what a blind and witless fool it is,
That will not see its gains, its infinite gains——
*Kath.* Gain in a loss!
Or mirth in utter desolation!
*Mrs. F.* He doting on a face—suppose it mine,
Or any other's tolerably fair—
What need you care about a senseless secret?
*Kath.* Perplex'd and fearful woman! I in part
Fathom your dangerous meaning. You have broke
The worse than iron band, fretting the soul,
By which you held me captive. Whether my husband
*Is* what you give him out, or your fool'd fancy
But dreams he is so, either way I am free.
*Mrs. F.* It talks it bravely, blazons out its shame;
A very heroine while on its knees;
Rowe's Penitent, an absolute Calista!
*Kath.* Not to thy wretched self these tears are falling;
But to my husband, and offended Heaven,
Some drops are due—and then I sleep in peace,
Relieved from frightful dreams, my dreams though sad. [*Exit.*

*Mrs. F.* I have gone too far. Who knows but in this mood
She may forestall my story, win on Selby
By a frank confession ?—and the time draws on
For our appointed meeting. The game's desperate
For which I play. A moment's difference
May make it hers or mine. I fly to meet him. [*Exit.*

SCENE.—*A Garden.*

MR. SELBY. MRS. FRAMPTON.

*Selby.* I am not so ill a guesser, Mistress Frampton,
Not to conjecture that some passages
In your unfinish'd story, rightly interpreted,
Glanced at my bosom's peace ;
You knew my wife?
*Mrs. F.* Even from her earliest school-days.—What of that ?
Or how is she concern'd in my fine riddles,
Framed for the hour's amusement ?
*Selby.* By my *hopes*
Of my new interest conceived in you,
And by the honest passion of my heart,
Which not obliquely I to you did hint;
Come from the clouds of misty allegory,
And in plain language let me hear the worst.
Stand I disgraced, or no?
*Mrs. F.* Then, by *my* hopes
Of my new interest conceived in you,
And by the kindling passion in *my* breast,
Which through my riddles you had almost read,
Adjured so strongly, I will tell you all.
In her school years, then bordering on fifteen,
Or haply not much past, she loved a youth——
*Selby.* My most ingenuous Widow——
*Mrs. F.* Met him oft
By stealth, where I still of the party was——
*Selby.* Prime confidante to all the school, I warrant,
And general go-between—— (*aside*).
*Mrs. F.* One morn he came
In breathless haste :—" The ship was under sail,
Or in few hours would be, that must convey
Him and his destinies to barbarous shores,
Where, should he perish by inglorious hands,
It would be consolation in his death
To have call'd his Katherine *his*."
*Selby.* Thus far the story
Tallies with what I hoped (*aside*).
*Mrs. F.* Wavering between
The doubt of doing wrong, and losing him ;
And my dissuasions not o'er hotly urged,
Whom he had flatter'd with the bridemaid's part ;—
*Selby.* I owe my subtle widow, then, for this (*aside*).
*Mrs. F.* Briefly, we went to church. The ceremony
Scarcely was huddled over, and the ring
Yet cold upon her finger, when they parted—
He to his ship; and we to school got back,
Scarce miss'd, before the dinner-bell could ring.

*Selby.* And from that hour——
*Mrs. F.* Nor sight, nor news of him,
For aught that I could hear, she e er obtain'd.
*Selby.* Like to a man that hovers in suspense
Over a letter just received, on which
The black seal hath impress'd its ominous token,
Whether to open it or no, so I
Suspended stand, whether to press my fate
Further, or check ill curiosity,
That tempts me to more loss.—The name, the name
Of this fine youth?
*Mrs. F.* What boots it, if 'twere told?
*Selby.* Now, by our loves,
And by my hopes of happier wedlocks, some day
To be accomplish'd, give to me his name!
*Mrs. F.* 'Tis no such serious matter. It was—Huntingdon.
*Selby.* How have three little syllables pluck'd from me
A world of countless hopes!—(*aside*). Evasive Widow!
*Mrs. F.* How, sir! I like not this (*aside*).
*Selby.* No, no, I meant
Nothing but good to thee. That other woman,
How shall I call her but evasive, false,
And treacherous?—by the trust I place in thee,
Tell me, and tell me truly, was the name
As you pronounced it?
*Mrs. F.* Huntingdon—the name
Which his paternal grandfather assumed,
Together with the estates, of a remote
Kinsman: but our high-spirited youth——
*Selby.* Yes——
*Mrs. F.* Disdaining
For sordid pelf to truck the family honours,
At risk of the lost estates resumed the old style,
And answer'd only to the name of——
*Selby.* What?
*Mrs. F.* Of Halford.
*Selby.* A Huntingdon to Halford changed so soon
Why, then, I see a witch hath her good spells
As well as bad, and can by a backward charm
Unruffle the foul storm she has just been raising.
[*Aside. He makes the signal.*
My frank, fair-spoken Widow! let this kiss,
Which yet aspires no higher, speak my thanks,
Till I can think on greater.

*Enter* LUCY *and* KATHERINE.

*Mrs. F.* Interrupted!
*Selby.* My sister here! and see, where with her comes
My serpent gliding in an angel's form,
To taint the new-born Eden of our joys.
Why should we fear them? We'll not stir a foot,
Nor coy it for their pleasures. [*He courts the Widow.*
*Lucy* (*to* KATHERINE). This, your free
And sweet ingenuous confession binds me
For ever to you; and it shall go hard

But it shall fetch you back your husband's heart,
That now seems blindly straying; or, at worst,
In me you have still a sister.—Some wives, brother,
Would think it strange to catch their husbands thus
Alone with a trim widow; but your Katherine
Is arm'd, I think, with patience.

*Kath.* I am fortified
With knowledge of self-faults to endure worse wrongs—
If they be wrongs, than he can lay upon me;
Even to look on—and see him sue in earnest,
As now I think he does it but in seeming,
To that ill woman.

*Selby.* Good words, gentle Kate,
And not a thought irreverent of our Widow.
Why, 'twere unmannerly at any time,
But most uncourteous on our wedding-day,
When we should show most hospitable.—Some wine. [*Wine is brought.*
I am for sports. And now I do remember,
The old Egyptians at their banquets placed
A charnel sight of dead men's skulls before them,
With images of cold mortality,
To temper their fierce joys when they grew rampant.
I like the custom well: and ere we crown
With freer mirth the day, I shall propose,
In calmest recollection of our spirits,
We drink the solemn "Memory of the Dead."

*Mrs. F.* Or the supposed dead (*aside to him*).

*Selby.* Pledge me, good wife—(*she fills*).
Nay, higher yet, till the brimm'd cup swell o'er.

*Kath.* I catch the awful import of your words;
And, though I could accuse you of unkindness,
Yet as your lawful and obedient wife,
While that name lasts (as I perceive it fading,
Nor I much longer may have leave to use it),
I calmly take the office you impose;
And on my knees, imploring their forgiveness,
Whom I in heaven or earth may have offended,
Exempt from starting tears, and woman's weakness,
I pledge you, sir—The Memory of the Dead! [*She drinks kneeling.*

*Selby.* 'Tis gently and discreetly said, and like
My former loving Kate.

*Mrs. F.* Does he relent? (*aside*).

*Selby.* That ceremony past, we give the day
To unabated sport. And, in requital
Of certain stories, and quaint allegories,
Which my rare Widow hath been telling to me,
To raise my morning mirth, if she will lend
Her patient hearing, I will here recite
A Parable; and, the more to suit her taste,
The scene is laid in the East.

*Mrs. F.* I long to hear it.—
Some tale, to fit his wife (*aside*).

*Kath.* Now comes my TRIAL.

*Lucy.* The hour of your deliverance is at hand,
If I presage right. Bear up, gentlest sister.

*Selby.* "The Sultan Haroun"—Stay—O now I have it—

"The Caliph Haroun in his orchards had
A fruit-tree, bearing such delicious fruits,
That he reserved them for his proper gust;
And through the palace it was death proclaim'd
To any one that should purloin the same."

*Mrs. F.* A heavy penance for so light a fault——

*Selby.* Pray you, be silent, else you put me out.
"A crafty page, that for advantage watch'd,
Detected in the act a brother page,
Of his own years, that was his bosom friend;
And thenceforth he became that other's lord,
And like a tyrant he demean'd himself,—
Laid forced exactions on his fellow's purse;
And when that poor means fail'd, held o'er his head
Threats of impending death in hideous forms;
Till the small culprit on his nightly couch
Dream'd of strange pains, and felt his body writhe
In tortuous pangs around the impaling stake."

*Mrs. F.* I like not this beginning——

*Selby.* Pray you attend.
"The Secret, like a night-hag, rid his sleeps,
And took the youthful pleasures from his days,
And chased the youthful smoothness from his brow,
That from a rose-cheek'd boy he waned and waned
To a pale skeleton of what he was;
And would have died, but for one lucky chance."

*Kath.* Oh!

*Mrs. F.* Your wife—she faints—some cordial—smell to this.

*Selby.* Stand off. My sister best will do that office.

*Mrs. F.* Are all his tempting speeches come to this? (*aside*).

*Selby.* What ail'd my wife?

*Kath.* A warning faintness, sir,
Seized on my spirits when you came to where
You said "a lucky chance." I am better now.
Please you go on.

*Selby.* The sequel shall be brief.

*Kath.* But, brief or long, I feel my fate hangs on it (*aside*).

*Selby.* "One morn the Caliph, in a covert hid,
Close by an arbour where the two boys talk'd
(As oft we read that Eastern sovereigns
Would play the eaves-dropper, to learn the truth
Imperfectly received from mouths of slaves),
O'erheard their dialogue; and heard enough
To judge aright the cause, and know his cue.
The following day a Cadi was despatch'd
To summon both before the judgment-seat;
The lickerish culprit, almost dead with fear,
And the informing friend, who readily,
Fired with fair promises of large reward,
And Caliph's love, the hateful truth disclosed."

*Mrs. F.* What did the Caliph to the offending boy,
That had so grossly err'd?

*Selby.* His sceptred hand
He forth in token of forgiveness stretch'd
And clapp'd his cheeks, and courted him with gifts,
And he became once more his favourite page.

*Mrs. F.* But for that other——
*Selby.* He dismiss'd him straight,
From dreams of grandeur and of Caliph's love,
To the bare cottage on the withering moor,
Where friends, turn'd fiends, and hollow confidants,
And widows, hide, who in a husband's ear
Pour baneful truths, but tell not all the truth;
And told him not that Robin Halford died
Some moons before *his* marriage-bells were rung.
Too near dishonour hast thou trod, dear wife,
And on a dangerous cast our fates were set;
But Heaven, that will'd our wedlock to be blest,
Hath interposed to save it gracious too.
Your penance is—to dress your cheek in smiles,
And to be once again my merry Kate.—
Sister, your hand;
Your wager won, makes me a happy man;
Though poorer, Heaven knows, by a thousand pounds.
The sky clears up after a dubious day.—
Widow, your hand. I read a penitence
In this dejected brow; and in this shame
Your fault is buried. You shall in with us,
And, if it please you, taste our nuptial fare;
For, till this moment, I can joyful say,
Was never truly Selby's Wedding Day.

# The Pawnbroker's Daughter.

## A FARCE.

(*Blackwood's Magazine*, January, 1830.)

[A foretaste of this gravely humorous conceit will be found in one of Charles Lamb's earliest and most whimsical essays, "On the Inconveniences of being Hanged," a paper contributed by him, in 1811, to the second number of Leigh Hunt's *Reflector*, in the form of a letter, signed "Pensilis." The similarity of the humour running through farce and essay is clearly discernible upon a comparison of the whole of the latter with the closing words of Pendulous.]

CHARACTERS.

FLINT, *a Pawnbroker.*
DAVENPORT, *in love with* MARIAN.
PENDULOUS, *a Reprieved Gentleman.*
CUTLET, *a Sentimental Butcher.*
GOLDING, *a Magistrate.*
WILLIAM, *Apprentice to Flint.*
BEN, *Cutlet's Boy.*

MISS FLYN.
BETTY, *her Maid.*
MARIAN, *Daughter to Flint.*
LUCY, *her Maid.*

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at* FLINT'S *house.*

FLINT. WILLIAM.

*Flint.* Carry those umbrellas, cottons, and wearing apparel, upstairs. You may send that chest of tools to Robins's.

*Wil.* That which you lent six pounds upon to the journeyman carpenter that had the sick wife?

*Flint.* The same.

*Wil.* The man says if you can give him till Thursday——

*Flint.* Not a minute longer. His time was out yesterday. These improvident fools!

*Wil.* The finical gentleman has been here about the seal that was his grandfather's.

*Flint.* He cannot have it. Truly, our trade would be brought to a fine pass if we were bound to humour the fancies of our customers. This man would be taking a liking to a snuff-box that he had inherited; and that gentlewoman might conceit a favourite chemise that had descended to her.

*Wil.* The lady in the carriage has been here crying about those jewels. She says if you cannot let her have them at the advance she offers, her husband will come to know that she has pledged them.

*Flint.* I have uses for those jewels. Send Marian to me. (*Exit* WILLIAM.) I know no other trade that is expected to depart from its fair advantages but ours. I do not see the baker, the butcher, the shoemaker, or, to go higher, the lawyer, the physician, the divine, give up any of their legitimate gains, even when the pretences of their art had failed; yet *we* are to be branded with an odious name, stigmatized, discountenanced even by the administrators of those laws which acknowledge us; scowled at by the lower sort of people, whose needs we serve!

*Enter* MARIAN.

Come hither, Marian. Come, kiss your father. The report runs that he is full of spotted crime. What is your belief, child?

*Mar.* That never good report went with our calling, father. I have heard you say, the poor look only to the advantages which we derive from them, and overlook the accommodations which they receive from us. But the poor *are* the poor, father, and have little leisure to make distinctions. I wish we could give up this business.

*Flint.* You have not seen that idle fellow, Davenport?

*Mar.* No, indeed, father—since your injunction.

*Flint.* I take but my lawful profit. The law is not over favourable to us.

*Mar.* Marian is no judge of these things.

*Flint.* They call me oppressive, grinding—I know not what——

*Mar.* Alas!

*Flint.* Usurer, extortioner. Am I these things?

*Mar.* You are Marian's kind and careful father. That is enough for a child to know.

*Flint.* Here, girl, is a little box of jewels, which the necessities of a foolish woman of quality have transferred into our true and lawful possession. Go, place them with the trinkets that were your mother's. They are all yours, Marian, if you do not cross me in your marriage. No gentry shall match into this house, to flout their wife hereafter with her parentage. I will hold this business with convulsive grasp to my dying day. I will plague these *poor*, whom you speak so tenderly of.

*Mar.* You frighten me, father. Do not frighten Marian.

*Flint.* I have heard them say, There goes Flint—Flint, the cruel pawnbroker!

*Mar.* Stay at home with Marian. You shall hear no ugly words to vex you.

*Flint.* You shall ride in a gilded chariot upon the necks of these *poor*, Marian. Their tears shall drop pearls for my girl. Their sighs shall be good wind for us. They shall blow good for my girl. Put up the jewels, Marian.
[*Exit.*

*Enter* LUCY.

*Lucy.* Miss, miss, your father has taken his hat, and is stepped out, and Mr. Davenport is on the stairs; and I came to tell you——

*Mar.* Alas! who let him in?

*Enter* DAVENPORT.

*Dav.* My dearest girl——

*Mar.* My father will kill me if he finds you have been here!

*Dav.* There is no time for explanations. I have positive information that your father means, in less than a week, to dispose of you to that ugly Saunders. The wretch has bragged of it to his acquaintances, and already calls you *his.*

*Mar.* O heavens!

*Dav.* Your resolution must be summary as the time which calls for it. Mine or his you must be, without delay. There is no safety for you under this roof.

*Mar.* My father——

*Dav.* Is no father, if he would sacrifice you.

*Mar.* But he is unhappy. Do not speak hard words of my father.

*Dav.* Marian must exert her good sense.

*Lucy* (*as if watching at the window*). O, miss, your father has suddenly returned. I see him with Mr. Saunders, coming down the street. Mr. Saunders, ma'am!

*Mar.* Begone, begone, if you love me, Davenport!

*Dav.* You must go with me then, else here I am fixed.

*Lucy.* Ay, miss, you must go, as Mr. Davenport says. Here is your cloak, miss, and your hat, and your gloves. Your father, ma'am——

*Mar.* Oh! where—where? Whither do you hurry me, Davenport?

*Dav.* Quickly, quickly, Marian! At the back door.

[*Exit* MARIAN *with* DAVENPORT, *reluctantly; in her flight still holding the jewels.*

*Lucy.* Away—away! What a lucky thought of mine to say her father was coming! he would never have got her off else. Lord, Lord, I do love to help lovers! [*Exit, following them.*

SCENE II.—*A Butcher's Shop.*

CUTLET. BEN.

*Cut.* Reach me down that book off the shelf, where the shoulder of veal hangs.

*Ben.* Is this it?

*Cut.* No—this is "Flowers of Sentiment"—the other—ay, this is a good book. "An Argument against the Use of Animal Food. By J. R." *That* means Joseph Ritson. I will open it anywhere, and read just as it happens. One cannot dip amiss in such books as these. The motto, I see, is from Pope. I dare say very much to the purpose (*reads*).

"The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he sport and play?
Pleased to the last, he crops his flowery food,
And licks the hand——"

Bless us, is that saddle of mutton gone home to Mrs. Simpson's? It should have gone an hour ago.

*Ben.* I was just going with it.

*Cut.* Well, go. Where was I? Oh!

"And licks the hand just raised to shed its blood."

What an affecting picture! (*turns over the leaves, and reads*). "It is probable that the long lives which are recorded of the people before the flood were owing to their being confined to a vegetable diet."

*Ben.* The young gentleman in Pullen's Row, Islington, that has got the consumption, has sent to know if you can let him have a sweetbread.

*Cut.* Take two,—take all that are in the shop. What a disagreeable interruption! (*reads again*). "Those fierce and angry passions, which impel man to wage destructive war with man, may be traced to the ferment in the blood produced by an animal diet."

*Ben.* The two pound of rump-steaks must go home to Mr. Molyneux's. He is in training to fight Cribb.

*Cut.* Well, take them; go along, and do not trouble me with your disgusting details. [*Exit* BEN.

*Cut.* (*throwing down the book*). Why was I bred to this detestable business? Was it not plain that this trembling sensibility, which has marked my character from earliest infancy, must for ever disqualify me for a profession which—— what do ye want? what do ye buy? O, it is only somebody going past. I thought it had been a customer.—Why was not I bred a glover, like my cousin Langston? To see him poke his two little sticks into a delicate pair of real Woodstock! "A very little stretching, ma'am, and they will fit exactly."— Or a haberdasher, like my next-door neighbour—"Not a better bit of lace in all town, my lady—Mrs. Breakstock took the last of it last Friday—all but this bit, which I can afford to let your ladyship have a bargain. Reach down that drawer on your left hand, Miss Fisher."

*Enter, in haste,* DAVENPORT, MARIAN, *and* LUCY.

*Lucy.* This is the house I saw a bill up at, ma'am; and a droll creature the landlord is.

*Dav.* We have no time for nicety.

*Cut.* What do ye want? what do ye buy? O, it is only you, Mrs. Lucy. [LUCY *whispers* CUTLET.

*Cut.* I have a set of apartments at the end of my garden. They are quite detached from the shop. A single lady at present occupies the ground floor.

*Mar.* Ay, ay, anywhere.

*Dav.* In, in.

*Cut.* Pretty lamb!—she seems agitated.

DAVENPORT *and* MARIAN *go in with* CUTLET.

*Lucy.* I am mistaken if my young lady does not find an agreeable companion in these apartments. Almost a namesake. Only the difference of Flyn and Flint. I have some errands to do, or I would stop and have some fun with this droll butcher

CUTLET *returns.*

*Cut.* Why, how odd this is! *Your* young lady knows *my* young lady. They are as thick as flies.

*Lucy.* You may thank me for your new lodger, Mr. Cutlet.—But, bless me, you do not look well?

*Cut.* To tell you the truth, I am rather heavy about the eyes. Want of sleep, I believe.

*Lucy.* Late hours, perhaps. Raking last night?

*Cut.* No, that is not it, Mrs. Lucy. My repose was disturbed by a very different cause from what you may imagine. It procceded from too much thinking.

*Lucy.* The deuce it did! and what, if I may be so bold, might be the subject of your Night Thoughts?

*Cut.* The distresses of my fellow-creatures. I never lay my head down on my pillow but I fall a-thinking how many at this very instant are perishing. Some with cold——

*Lucy.* What, in the midst of summer?

*Cut.* Ay. Not here, but in countries abroad, where the climate is different from ours. Our summers are their winters, and *vice versâ*, you know. Some with cold——

*Lucy.* What a canting rogue it is! I should like to trump up some fine story to plague him (*aside*).

*Cut.* Others with hunger—some a prey to the rage of wild beasts——

*Lucy.* He has got this by rote, out of some book.

*Cut.* Some drowning, crossing crazy bridges in the dark—some by the violence of the devouring flame——

*Lucy.* I have it.—For that matter, you need not send your humanity a-travelling, Mr. Cutlet. For instance, last night——

*Cut.* Some by fevers, some by gun-shot wounds——

*Lucy.* Only two streets off——

*Cut.* Some in drunken quarrels——

*Lucy* (*aloud*). The butcher's shop at the corner.

*Cut.* What were you saying about poor Cleaver?

*Lucy.* He has found his ears at last (*aside*). That he has had his house burnt down.

*Cut.* Bless me!

*Lucy.* I saw four small children taken in at the greengrocer's.

*Cut.* Do you know if he is insured?

*Lucy.* Some say he is, but not to the full amount.

*Cut.* Not to the full amount—how shocking! He killed more meat than any of the trade between here and Carnaby Market—and the poor babes—four of them you say—what a melting sight!—he served some good customers about Marybone—I always think more of the children in these cases than of the fathers and mothers—Lady Lovebrown liked his veal better than any man's in the market—I wonder whether her ladyship is engaged—I must go and comfort poor Cleaver, however. [*Exit.*

*Lucy.* Now is this pretender to humanity gone to avail himself of a neighbour's supposed ruin to inveigle his customers from him. Fine feelings!—pshaw! [*Exit.*

*Re-enter* CUTLET.

*Cut.* What a deceitful young hussey! there is not a word of truth in her. There has been no fire. How can people play with one's feelings so!—(*sings*)—"For tenderness formed"—No, I'll try the air I made upon myself. The words may compose me. (*Sings*)—

> A weeping Londoner I am,
> A washerwoman was my dam;
> She bred me up in a cock-loft,
> And fed my mind with sorrows soft;
>
> For when she wrung with elbows stout
> From linen wet the water out,—
> The drops so like to tears did drip,
> They gave my infant nerves the hyp.

Scarce three clean muckingers a week
Would dry the brine that dew'd my cheek;
So while I gave my sorrows scope,
I almost ruin'd her in soap.

My parish learning I did win
In ward of Farringdon-Within;
Where, after school, I did pursue
My sports, as little boys will do.

Cockchafers—none like me was found
To set them spinning round and round.
O how my tender heart would melt,
To think what those poor varmin felt!

I never tied tin-kettle, clog,
Or salt-box to the tail of dog,
Without a pang more keen at heart
Than he felt at his outward part.

And when the poor thing clatter'd off,
To all the unfeeling mob a scoff,
Thought I, "What that dumb creature feels,
With half the parish at his heels!"

Arrived, you see, to man's estate,
The butcher's calling is my fate;
Yet still I keep my feeling ways,
And leave the town on slaughtering days.

At Kentish Town, or Highgate Hill,
I sit, retired, beside some rill;
And tears bedew my glistening eye,
To think my playful lambs must die!

But when they're dead I sell their meat,
On shambles kept both clean and neat;
Sweetbreads also I guard full well,
And keep them from the blue-bottle.

Envy, with breath sharp as my steel,
Has ne'er yet blown upon my veal;
And mouths of dames, and daintiest fops,
Do water at my nice lamb-chops.

[*Exit, half laughing, half crying.*

SCENE III.—*A Street.*

DAVENPORT, *solus.*

*Dav.* Thus far have I secured my charming prize. I can appreciate, while I lament, the delicacy which makes her refuse the protection of my sister's roof. But who comes here?

*Enter* PENDULOUS, *agitated.*

It must be he. That fretful animal motion—that face working up and down with uneasy sensibility, like new yeast. Jack—Jack Pendulous!

*Pen.* It is your old friend, and very miserable.

*Dav.* Vapours, Jack. I have not known you fifteen years to have to guess at your complaint. Why, they troubled you at school. Do you remember when you had to speak the speech of Buckingham, where he is going to execution?

*Pen.* Execution!—he has certainly heard it (*aside*).

*Dav.* What a pucker you were in overnight!

*Pen.* May be so, may be so, Mr. Davenport. That was an imaginary scene. I have had real troubles since.

*Dav.* Pshaw! so you call every common accident.

*Pen.* Do you call my case so common, then?

*Dav.* What case?

*Pen.* You have not heard, then?

*Dav.* Positively not a word.

*Pen.* You must know I have been—(*whispers*)—tried for a felony since then.

*Dav.* Nonsense!

*Pen.* No subject for mirth, Mr. Davenport. A confounded short-sighted fellow swore that I stopped him and robbed him on the York race-ground at nine on a fine moonlight evening, when I was two hundred miles off in Dorsetshire. These hands have been held up at a common bar.

*Dav.* Ridiculous! it could not have gone so far.

*Pen.* A great deal farther, I assure you, Mr. Davenport. I am ashamed to say how far it went. You must know, that in the first shock and surprise of the accusation, shame—you know I was always susceptible—shame put me upon disguising my *name*, that, at all events, it might bring no disgrace upon my family. I called myself *James Thomson.*

*Dav.* For Heaven's sake, compose yourself.

*Pen.* I will. An old family ours, Mr. Davenport—never had a blot upon it till now—a family famous for the jealousy of its honour for many generations—think of that, Mr. Davenport—that felt a stain like a wound——

*Dav.* Be calm, my dear friend.

*Pen.* This served the purpose of a temporary concealment well enough; but when it came to the—*alibi,* I think they call it—excuse these technical terms, they are hardly fit for the mouth of a gentleman—the *witnesses*—that is another term—that I had sent for up from Melcombe Regis, and relied upon for clearing up my character, by disclosing my real name, *John Pendulous*—so discredited the cause which they came to serve, that it had quite a contrary effect to what was intended. In short, the usual forms passed, and you behold me here the miserablest of mankind.

*Dav.* (*aside*). He must be light-headed.

*Pen.* Not at all, Mr. Davenport. I hear what you say, though you speak it all on one side, as they do at the playhouse.

*Dav.* The sentence could never have been carried into—pshaw!—you are joking—the truth must have come out at last.

*Pen.* So it did, Mr. Davenport—just two minutes and a second too late by the Sheriff's stop-watch. Time enough to save my life—my wretched life—but an age too late for my honour. Pray change the subject—the detail must be as offensive to you.

*Dav.* With all my heart—to a more pleasing theme. The lovely Maria Flyn—are you friends in that quarter still? Have the old folks relented?

*Pen.* They are dead, and have left her mistress of her inclinations. But it requires great strength of mind to——

*Dav.* To what?

*Pen.* To stand up against the sneers of the world. It is not every young lady that feels herself confident against the shafts of ridicule, though aimed by the hand of prejudice. Not but in her heart, I believe, she prefers me to all mankind. But think what the world would say if, in defiance of the opinions of mankind, she should take to her arms a—reprieved man!

*Dav.* Whims! You might turn the laugh of the world upon itself in a fortnight. These things are but nine days' wonders.

*Pen.* Do you think so, Mr. Davenport?

*Dav.* Where does she live?

*Pen.* She has lodgings in the next street, in a sort of garden-house, that belongs to one Cutlet. I have not seen her since the affair. I was going there at her request.

*Dav.* Ha, ha, ha!

*Pen.* Why do you laugh?

*Dav.* The oddest fellow! I will tell you—— But here he comes.

*Enter* CUTLET.

*Cut.* (*to* DAVENPORT). Sir, the young lady at my house is desirous you should return immediately. She has heard something from home.

*Pen.* What do I hear?

*Dav.* 'Tis her fears, I dare say. My dear Pendulous, you will excuse me?— I must not tell him our situation at present, though it cost him a fit of jealousy. We shall have fifty opportunities for explanation. [*Exit.*

*Pen.* Does that gentleman visit the lady at your lodgings?

*Cut.* He is quite familiar there, I assure you. He is all in all with her, as they say.

*Pen.* It is but too plain. Fool that I have been, not to suspect that, while she pretended scruples, some rival was at the root of her infidelity!

*Cut.* You seem distressed, sir? Bless me!

*Pen.* I am, friend, above the reach of comfort.

*Cut.* Consolation, then, can be to no purpose?

*Pen.* None.

*Cut.* I am so happy to have met with him!

*Pen.* Wretch, wretch, wretch!

*Cut.* There he goes! How he walks about biting his nails! I would not exchange this luxury of unavailing pity for worlds.

*Pen.* Stigmatized by the world——

*Cut.* My case exactly. Let us compare notes.

*Pen.* Nor an accident which——

*Cut.* For a profession which——

*Pen.* In the eye of reason has nothing in it——

*Cut.* Absolutely nothing in it——

*Pen.* Brought up at a public bar——

*Cut.* Brought up to an odious trade——

*Pen.* With nerves like mine——

*Cut.* With nerves like mine——

*Pen.* Arraigned, condemned——

*Cut.* By a foolish world——

*Pen.* By a judge and jury——

*Cut.* By an invidious exclusion disqualified for sitting upon a jury at all——

*Pen.* Tried, cast, and——

*Cut.* What?

*Pen.* HANGED, sir, HANGED by the neck, till I was——

*Cut.* Bless me!

*Pen.* Why should not I publish it to the whole world, since she, whose prejudice alone I wished to overcome, deserts me?

*Cut.* Lord have mercy upon us! not so bad as that comes to, I hope?

*Pen.* When she joins in the judgment of an illiberal world against me——

*Cut.* You said HANGED, sir—that is, I mean, perhaps I mistook you. How ghastly he looks!

*Pen.* Fear me not, my friend. I am no ghost—though I heartily wish I were one.

*Cut.* Why, then, ten to one you were——

*Pen.* *Cut down.* The odious word shall out though it choke me.

*Cut.* Your case must have some things in it very curious. I dare say you kept a journal of your sensations.

*Pen.* Sensations!

*Cut.* Ay, while you were being—you know what I mean. They say persons in your situation have lights dancing before their eyes—bluish. But then the worst of all is coming to one's self again.

*Pen.* Plagues, furies, tormentors! I shall go mad! [*Exit.*

*Cut.* There, he says he shall go mad. Well, my head has not been very right of late. It goes with a whirl and a buzz somehow. I believe I must not think so deeply. Common people that don't reason know nothing of these aberrations.

> Great wits go mad, and small ones only dull;
> Distracting cares vex not the empty skull:
> They seize on heads that think, and hearts that feel,
> As flies attack the—better sort of veal.

[*Exit.*

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## ACT II.

### SCENE, *at* FLINT'S.

FLINT. WILLIAM.

*Flint.* I have overwalked myself, and am quite exhausted. Tell Marian to come and play to me.

*Wil.* I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

*Flint.* I have been troubled with an evil spirit of late—I think an evil spirit. It goes and comes, as my daughter is with or from me. It cannot stand before her gentle look, when, to please her father, she takes down her music-book.

*Enter* WILLIAM.

*Wil.* Miss Marian went out soon after you, and is not returned.

*Flint.* That is a pity—that is a pity. Where can the foolish girl be gadding?

*Wil.* The shopmen say she went out with Mr. Davenport.

*Flint.* Davenport? Impossible!

*Wil.* They say they are sure it was he, by the same token that they saw her slip into his hand, when she was past the door, the casket which you gave her.

*Flint.* Gave her, William? I only entrusted it to her. She has robbed me! Marian is a thief! You must go to the Justice, William, and get out a warrant against her immediately. Do you help them in the description. Put in "Marian Flint," in plain words—no remonstrances, William—"daughter of Reuben Flint,"—no remonstrances, but do it——

*Wil.* Nay, sir——

*Flint.* I am rock, absolute rock, to all that you can say—a piece of solid rock. What is it that makes my legs to fail, and my whole frame to totter thus? It has been my overwalking. I am very faint. Support me in, William. [*Exeunt.*

### SCENE.—*The Apartment of* MISS FLYN.

MISS FLYN. BETTY.

*Miss F.* 'Tis past eleven. Every minute I expect Mr. Pendulous here. What a meeting do I anticipate!

*Bet.* Anticipate, truly! what other than a joyful meeting can it be between two agreed lovers who have been parted these four months?

*Miss F.* But in that cruel space what accidents have happened! (*Aside*) As yet I perceive she is ignorant of this unfortunate affair.

*Bet.* Lord, madam, what accidents? He has not had a fall or a tumble, has he? He is not coming upon crutches?

*Miss F.* Not exactly a fall. (*Aside*) I wish I had courage to admit her to my confidence.

*Bet.* If his neck is whole, his heart is so too, I warrant it.

*Miss F.* His neck! (*Aside*) She certainly mistrusts something. He writes me word that this must be his last interview.

*Bet.* Then I guess the whole business. The wretch is unfaithful. Some creature or other has got him into a noose.

*Miss F.* A noose!

*Bet.* And I shall never more see him hang——

*Miss F.* Hang, did you say, Betty?

*Bet.* About that dear, fond neck, I was going to add, madam, but you interrupted me.

*Miss F.* I can no longer labour with a secret which oppresses me thus. Can you be trusty?

*Bet.* Who, I, madam? (*Aside*) Lord, I am so glad! Now I shall know all.

*Miss F.* This letter discloses the reason of his unaccountable long absence from me. Peruse it, and say if we have not reason to be unhappy.

(BETTY *retires to the window to read the letter,* Mr. PENDULOUS *enters.*)

*Miss F.* My dear Pendulous!

*Pen.* Maria!—nay, shun the embraces of a disgraced man, who comes but to tell you that you must renounce his society for ever.

*Miss F.* Nay, Pendulous, avoid me not.

*Pen.* (*aside*). That was tender! I may be mistaken. Whilst I stood on honourable terms, Maria might have met my caresses without a blush.

(BETTY, *who has not attended to the entrance of* PENDULOUS, *through her eagerness to read the letter, comes forward.*)

*Bet.* Ha! ha! ha! What a funny story, madam. And this is all you make such a fuss about? I should not care if twenty of my lovers had been—— (*seeing* PENDULOUS) Lord, sir, I ask pardon!

*Pen.* Are we not alone, then?

*Miss F.* 'Tis only Betty—my old servant. You remember Betty?

*Pen.* What letter is that?

*Miss F.* Oh! something from her sweetheart, I suppose.

*Bet.* Yes, ma'am, that is all. I shall die of laughing.

*Pen.* You have not surely been showing her——

*Miss F.* I must be ingenuous. You must know, then, that I was just giving Betty a hint as you came in.

*Pen.* A hint!

*Miss. F.* Yes, of our unfortunate embarrassment.

*Pen.* My letter!

*Miss. F.* I thought it as well that she should know it at first.

*Pen.* 'Tis mighty well, madam! 'Tis as it should be! I was ordained to be a wretched laughing-stock to all the world, and it is fit that our drabs and our servant wenches should have their share of the amusement!

*Bet.* Marry come up! Drabs and servant wenches! and this from a person in his circumstances!

[BETTY *flings herself out of the room, muttering.*

*Miss F.* I understand not this language. I was prepared to give my Pendulous a tender meeting; to assure him that however, in the eyes of the

superficial and the censorious, he may have incurred a partial degradation, in the esteem of one, at least, he stood as high as ever; that it was not in the power of a ridiculous *accident*, involving no guilt, no shadow of imputation, to separate two hearts cemented by holiest vows, as ours have been. This untimely repulse to my affections may awaken scruples in me which hitherto, in tenderness to you, I have suppressed.

*Pen.* I very well understand what you call tenderness, madam; but in some situations, pity—pity—is the greatest insult.

*Miss F.* I can endure no longer. When you are in a calmer mood, you will be sorry that you have wrung my heart so. [*Exit.*

*Pen.* Maria! She is gone—in tears. Yet it seems she has had her scruples. She said she had tried to smother them. Her maid Betty intimated as much.

*Re-enter* BETTY.

*Bet.* Never mind Betty, sir; depend upon it she will never 'peach.

*Pen.* 'Peach!

*Bet.* Lord, sir, these scruples will blow over. Go to her again, when she is in a better humour. You know we must stand off a little at first, to save appearances.

*Pen.* Appearances! *We!*

*Bet.* It will be decent to let some time elapse.

*Pen.* Time elapse!

> Lost, wretched Pendulous! to scorn betray'd,
> The scoff alike of mistress and of maid!
> What now remains for thee, forsaken man,
> But to complete thy fate's abortive plan,
> And finish what the feeble law began?

[*Exeunt.*

*Re-enter* MISS FLYN, *with* MARIAN.

*Miss F.* Now both our lovers are gone, I hope my friend will have less reserve. You must consider this apartment as yours while you stay here. 'Tis larger and more commodious than your own.

*Mar.* You are kind, Maria. My sad story I have troubled you with. I have some jewels here, which I unintentionally brought away. I have only to beg that you will take the trouble to restore them to my father; and, without disclosing my present situation, to tell him that my next step—with or without the concurrence of Mr. Davenport—shall be to throw myself at his feet, and beg to be forgiven. I dare not see him till you have explored the way for me. I am convinced I was tricked into this elopement.

*Miss F.* Your commands shall be obeyed implicitly.

*Mar.* You are good (*agitated*).

*Miss F.* Moderate your apprehensions, my sweet friend. I too have known my sorrows—(*smiling*).—You have heard of the ridiculous affair.

*Mar.* Between Mr. Pendulous and you? Davenport informed me of it, and we took the liberty of blaming the over-niceness of your scruples.

*Miss F.* You mistake. The refinement is entirely on the part of my lover. He thinks me not nice enough. I am obliged to feign a little reluctance, that he may not take quite a distaste to me. Will you believe it, that he turns my very constancy into a reproach, and declares that a woman must be devoid of all delicacy that, after a thing of that sort, could endure the sight of her husband in——

*Mar.* In what?

*Miss F.* The sight of a man at all in——

*Mar.* I comprehend you not.

*Miss F.* In—in a—(*whispers*)—night-cap, my dear! And now the mischief is out.

*Mar.* Is there no way to cure him?

*Miss F.* None, unless I were to try the experiment, by placing myself in the hands of justice for a little while, how far an equality in misfortune might breed a sympathy in sentiment. Our reputations would be both upon a level then, you know. What think you of a little innocent shop-lifting, in sport?

*Mar.* And by that contrivance to be taken before a magistrate? The project sounds oddly.

*Miss F* And yet I am more than half persuaded it is feasible.

*Enter* BETTY.

*Bet.* Mr. Davenport is below, ma'am, and desires to speak with you.

*Mar.* You will excuse me (*going. Turning back*) You will remember the casket. [*Exit.*

*Miss F.* Depend on me.

*Bet.* And a strange man desires to see you, ma'am. I do not half like his looks.

*Miss F.* Show him in.

[*Exit* BETTY, *and returns with a Police Officer.* BETTY *goes out.*

*Off.* Your servant, ma'am. Your name is——

*Miss F.* Flyn, sir. Your business with me?

*Off.* (*alternately surveying the lady and his paper of instructions*). Marian Flint.

*Miss F.* Maria Flyn.

*Off.* Ay, ay, Flyn or Flint. 'Tis all one. Some write plain Mary, and some put ann after it. I come about a casket.

*Miss F.* I guess the whole business. He takes me for my friend. Something may come out of this. I will humour him (*aside*).

*Off.* (*aside*). Answers the description to a tittle. "Soft, gray eyes, pale complexion——"

*Miss F.* Yet I have been told by flatterers that my eyes were blue—(*takes out a pocket-glass.*)—I hope I look pretty tolerably to-day.

*Off.* Blue!—they are a sort of bluish-gray, now I look better; and as for colour, that comes and goes. Blushing is often a sign of a hardened offender. Do you know anything of a casket?

*Miss F.* Here is one which a friend has just delivered to my keeping.

*Off.* And which I must beg leave to secure, together with your ladyship's person. "Garnets, pearls, diamond-bracelet,"—here they are, sure enough.

*Miss F.* Indeed, I am innocent.

*Off.* Every man is presumed so till he is found otherwise.

*Miss F.* Police wit! Have you a warrant?

*Off.* Tolerably cool that! Here it is, signed by Justice Golding, at the requisition of Reuben Flint, who deposes that you have robbed him.

*Miss F.* How lucky this turns out! (*aside*).—Can I be indulged with a coach?

*Off.* To Marlborough Street?—certainly. An old offender (*aside*). The thing shall be conducted with as much delicacy as is consistent with security.

*Miss F.* Police manners! I will trust myself to your protection then. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*Police Office.*

JUSTICE, FLINT, OFFICERS, &c.

*Just.* Before we proceed to extremities, Mr. Flint, let me entreat you to consider the consequences. What will the world say to your exposing your own child?

*Flint.* The world is not my friend. I belong to a profession which has long brought me acquainted with its injustice. I return scorn for scorn, and desire its censure above its plaudits.

*Just.* But in this case delicacy must make you pause.

*Flint.* Delicacy—ha! ha!—pawnbroker—how fitly these words suit! Delicate pawnbroker—delicate devil!—let the law take its course.

*Just.* Consider, the jewels are found.

*Flint.* 'Tis not the silly baubles I regard. Are you a man? are you a father? and think you I could stoop so low, vile as I stand here, as to make money—filthy money—of the stuff which a daughter's touch has desecrated? Deep in some pit first would I bury them.

*Just.* Yet pause a little. Consider. An only child!

*Flint.* Only, only,—there, it is that stings me—makes me mad! She was the only thing I had to love me—to bear me up against the nipping injuries of the world. I prate when I should act. Bring in your prisoner.

(*The* JUSTICE *makes signs to an Officer, who goes out, and returns with* MISS FLYN.)

*Flint.* What mockery of my sight is here? This is no daughter.

*Off.* Daughter, or no daughter, she has confessed to this casket.

*Flint* (*handling it*). The very same. Was it in the power of these pale splendours to dazzle the sight of honesty—to put out the regardful eye of piety and daughter-love? Why, a poor glowworm shows more brightly. Bear witness how I valued them (*tramples on them*).—Fair lady, know you aught of my child?

*Miss F.* I shall here answer no questions.

*Just.* You must explain how you came by the jewels, madam.

*Miss F.* (*aside*). Now confidence assist me!—A gentleman in the neighbourhood will answer for me——

*Just.* His name——

*Miss F.* Pendulous——

*Just.* That lives in the next street?

*Miss F.* The same. Now I have him sure (*aside*).

*Just.* Let him be sent for. I believe the gentleman to be respectable, and will accept his security.

*Flint.* Why do I waste my time, where I have no business? None—I have none any more in the world—none!

*Enter* PENDULOUS.

*Pen.* What is the meaning of this extraordinary summons?—Maria here?

*Flint.* Know you anything of my daughter, sir?

*Pen.* Sir, I neither know her nor yourself, nor why I am brought hither; but for this lady, if you have anything against her, I will answer it with my life and fortunes.

*Just.* Make out the bail-bond.

*Off.* (*surveying* PENDULOUS). Please, your worship, before you take that gentleman's bond, may I have leave to put in a word?

*Pen.* (*agitated*). I guess what is coming.

*Off.* I have seen that gentleman hold up his hand at a criminal bar

*Just.* Ha!

*Miss F.* (*aside*). Better and better.

*Off.* My eyes cannot deceive me. His lips quivered about while he was being tried just as they do now. His name is not Pendulous.

*Miss F.* Excellent!

*Off.* He pleaded to the name of [illegible] at York assizes.

*Just.* Can this be true?
*Miss F.* I could kiss the fellow!
*Off.* He was had up for a footpad.
*Miss F.* A dainty fellow!
*Pen.* My iniquitous fate pursues me everywhere.
*Just.* You confess, then?
*Pen.* I am steeped in infamy.
*Miss F.* I am as deep in the mire as yourself.
*Pen.* My reproach can never be washed out.
*Miss F.* Nor mine.
*Pen.* I am doomed to everlasting shame.
*Miss F.* We are both in a predicament.
*Just.* I am in a maze where all this will end.
*Miss F.* But here comes one who, if I mistake not, will guide us out of all our difficulties.

*Enter* MARIAN *and* DAVENPORT.

*Mar.* (*kneeling*). My dear father!
*Flint.* Do I dream?
*Mar.* I am your Marian.
*Just.* Wonders thicken!
*Flint.* The casket——
*Miss F.* Let me clear up the rest.
*Flint.* The casket——
*Miss F.* Was inadvertently in your daughter's hand when, by an artifice of her maid Lucy,—set on, as she confesses, by this gentleman here——
*Dav.* I plead guilty.
*Miss F.* She was persuaded that you were in a hurry going to marry her to an object of her dislike; nay, that he was actually in the house for the purpose. The speed of her flight admitted not of her depositing the jewels; but to me, who have been her inseparable companion since she quitted your roof, she entrusted the return of them; which the precipitate measures of this gentleman (*pointing to the Officer*) alone prevented. Mr. Cutlet, whom I see coming, can witness this to be true.

*Enter* CUTLET, *in haste.*

*Cut.* Ay, poor lamb! poor lamb! I can witness. I have run in such a haste, hearing how affairs stood, that I have left my shambles without a protector. If your worship had seen how she cried (*pointing to* MARIAN), and trembled, and insisted upon being brought to her father! Mr. Davenport here could not stay her.
*Flint.* I can forbear no longer. Marian, will you play once again, to please your old father?
*Mar.* I have a good mind to make you buy me a new grand piano for your naughty suspicions of me.
*Dav.* What is to become of me?
*Flint.* I will do more than that. The poor lady shall have her jewels again.
*Mar.* Shall she?
*Flint.* Upon reasonable terms (*smiling*). And now, I suppose, the court may adjourn.
*Dav.* Marian!
*Flint.* I guess what is passing in your mind, Mr. Davenport; but you have behaved upon the whole so like a man of honour, that it will give me pleasure if you will visit at my house for the future; but (*smiling*) not clandestinely, Marian.

*Mar.* Hush! father.

*Flint.* I own I had prejudices against gentry. But I have met with so much candour and kindness among my betters this day—from this gentleman in particular—(*turning to the* JUSTICE)—that I begin to think of leaving off business, and setting up for a gentleman myself

*Just.* You have the feelings of one.

*Flint.* Marian will not object to it.

*Just.* But (*turning to* MISS FLYN) what motive could induce this lady to take so much disgrace upon herself, when a word's explanation might have relieved her?

*Miss F.* This gentleman (*turning to* PENDULOUS) can explain.

*Pen.* The devil!

*Miss F.* This gentleman, I repeat it, whose backwardness in concluding a long and honourable suit from a mistaken delicacy——

*Pen.* How?

*Miss F.* Drove me upon the expedient of involving myself in the same disagreeable embarrassments with himself, in the hope that a more perfect sympathy might subsist between us for the future.

*Pen.* I see it—I see it all.

*Just.* (*to* PENDULOUS). You were, then, tried at York?

*Pen.* I was——CAST——

*Just.* Condemned——

*Pen.* EXECUTED.

*Just.* How?

*Pen.* CUT DOWN and CAME TO LIFE AGAIN. False delicacy, adieu! The true sort, which this lady has manifested—by an expedient which at first sight might seem a little unpromising, has cured me of the other. We are now on even terms.

*Miss F.* And may——

*Pen.* Marry,—I know it was your word.

*Miss F.* And make a very quiet ——

*Pen.* Exemplary——

*Miss F.* Agreeing pair of——

*Pen.* ACQUITTED FELONS.

*Flint.* And let the prejudiced against our profession acknowledge that a money-lender may have the heart of a father; and that in the casket, whose loss grieved him so sorely, he valued nothing so dear as (*turning to* MARIAN) one poor domestic jewel.

# Comic Opera. (Unnamed.)

[What follows has been in this place deliberately appended to the acknowledged tragedy, farces, and dramatic poems of Charles Lamb, because the whole manuscript, in beautiful preservation, is undoubtedly in his handwriting. For nearly eleven years past, it has been treasured up in the British Museum. It is a perfectly legible MS. of fifty-nine quarto pages, numbered amongst Additional Manuscripts 25,924. It was presented to the nation in the November of 1864, by Mr. Coventry Patmore; and it has prefixed to it the following printed excerpt, from the Appendix to the first volume of "My Friends and Acquaintances, by P. G. Patmore:" "An unpublished drama—un-

questionably his (Charles Lamb's) first substantial production—a complete opera in three acts, numerous songs and concerted pieces, written expressly to popular melodies of the time, every portion of the manuscript, even to the minutest alterations, erasures, &c., being in his own handwriting." Reference is then made to pages 129 and 130 of the "Final Memorials," by Talfourd, in which an extract may be found from a letter of Mary Lamb's to Mrs. Hazlitt. This extract is certainly remarkable, as Mr. P. G. Patmore insists, with good show of reason (vol. i. p. 307); for inasmuch as, though it makes no direct allusion to this particular drama, it "establishes beyond all doubt a personal as well as a professional connection between Charles Lamb and the Sheridans." The importance of the little side-light thus thrown upon Charles Lamb's earlier life by his sister will be readily appreciated when the rumoured origin of this curious manuscript is taken into account. According to the story as it now runs, Charles Lamb, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and the latter's son, Thomas Sheridan, were wont, in the winter of 1795–96, to meet evening after evening (Charles being then a youngster of little more than twenty) for the purpose of hobnobbing, smoking, joking, and confabulating, while engaged in the joint composition of just such a dramatic production as the one subjoined. The coincidence is, at the least, remarkable, that here is precisely the kind of comic opera these three are reputed to have thus concocted together, and the whole of it from beginning to end is indisputably in Charles Lamb's handwriting. Another odd coincidence has until now been wholly unnoted—namely, that while Mary Lamb refers in so many words to "some scenes in a *speaking pantomime*," strangely enough the very first utterance in this comic opera is the inquiry addressed to the Drummer by Sergeant Halbert, "What news in the Garrison to-day? Thou'rt a very *harlequin* messenger, and of as many colours." To which the Drummer boy responds, "Yes, our young Aide-de-Camp keeps me wagging—there is not a drum in the army that is rattled about like me." Although it may still be matter of question with some whether, after all, this Comic Opera is really Charles Lamb's own composition, it is here deliberately appended to his acknowledged dramatic effusions, for the reason already given, because, nobody else claiming it, it is undoubtedly every bit of it in his own handwriting.]

## CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA.

LOVELACE, *a man of fortune, refused by Violeta, enlists for a Soldier and goes to Gibraltar.*
MAJOR APTJONES (*a Welshman*) } *Officers of the Garrison.*
CAPTAIN LOTHIAN (*a Scotchman*) }
BLOOMER, *Aide-de-Camp to the* GOVERNOR, *an admirer of* CAROLINE, *but a flatterer of* MRS. LAPELLE.
CAPTAIN LAPELLE, *an Officer who comes with his Lady to join the Garrison.*
GOVERNOR.
HALBERT, *a Sergeant.*
DRUMMER.
JUDGE ADVOCATE.
CLERK, SOLDIERS, &C.

### LADIES.

MRS. LAPELLE, *wife of* CAPTAIN LAPELLE,—*who encourages the addresses of* BLOOMER.
CAROLINE, *a Young Lady in love with* BLOOMER.
VIOLETA, *in the Character of an Officer, follows* LOVELACE *to Gibraltar.*
JESSE, *her Servant, habited as her Footboy.*
TRULLS, &C.

SCENE.—*Gibraltar.*

## ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE THE FIRST, *a Parade.*—SERGEANT HALBERT *and a* DRUMMER, *meeting as by chance.*

*Hal.* What news in the Garrison to-day? Thou'rt a very harlequin messenger—and of as many colours.

*Drum.* Yes, our young Aide-de-Camp keeps one wagging—there is not a drum in the army that is rattled about like me.

*Hal.* A drummer's profession in a pilgrimage, and if thou mind'st it, boy, it is a certain road to preferment: it has always succeeded in the army, and will ever raise a man to situation. Thou hast a ten rounds of love cartridges to fire off there.—What, is there anything new arrived?

*Drum.* Only four transports stuff'd with recruits—their wives and wenches. But among them is a Madam Lapelle—who is married,—a certain reason why all the Garrison should be mad after her.—She is the finest piece of red and white flesh that ever England trusted on salt water—she is as straight as a halbert, and as tight as a new braced drum.

*Hal.* The husband then is a lucky fellow, for here she'll be besieged like a frontier town;—and if she don't surrender—she is the first that ever defied the assailants of Gibraltar.

*Drum.* I believe I have ammunition enough about me to insure a capitulation; —but there is no fear of conquest while our young ensigns keep the cartouche box of Cupid.

*Hal.* A platoon of hair powder and washball will bring her down. These strangers make fair work for you.—You finger the pistareens, my little rattler of sheepskin.

*Drum.* No; poor pay when you consider I had twenty times a day from Europa point to the convent, bearing packets of sighs to red lips and bright black eyes. But this madam outstrips everything that appeared before. She has a skin fairer than Spanish milk—a cheek like a Barbary orange—and so delicate, that a puff of rocambole, from the Spanish Lines, would kill her dead as a rifleman. The Governor is ten years younger at the sight of her, and the aides-de-camp were up before the sun to be powdered, to do her honour. I am now on the wings of love, to invite all the world to bid her welcome, by the sound of drum.

*Air—The Réveillé, to fife and drum.*

Now Beauty's up, the army's gay,
And ev'ry heart beats réveillé;
A brighter flame can ne'er inspire
A soldier's breast with martial fire.

When sweet Beauty takes the field,
Generals and Captains yield;
Rank and file must all give way,
And to Beauty yield the day.

[*Exit.*

*Hal.* This drummer will beat himself into bread, while I shall remain here till I am fit for nothing but Chelsea. The god of war be praised, I never yet was enlisted by the parson, nor will I resign the name of Bachelor Halbert, while there is a comrade's wife to take pity on me.—But now to reconnoitre the new comers. May I never make another speech at the drum head, but I will have a wench out of this new draught. What should we do in this stone hen-coop if little England did not send us fresh provision? The life of a bachelor soldier is an honour to the army; but he that has a wife for a knapsack is his own baggage waggon.

*Air* (Sergeant Halbert)—"Bachelor Bluff."

He that is single is free from all care.
  Cæsar and Pompey were horned;
Tho' Sampson was strong, he was shorn of his hair,
  And, like a weak husband, was scorned.
Bachelor Bluff, heigh! for a heart that is tougher than buff.

Soldiers and sailors should never be wed,
But follow with rapture the wenches;
Let wives and their cuckolds go scolding to bed,
They sleep undisturb'd in the trenches.
Bachelor Bluff, heigh! for a heart that is tougher than buff.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Saloon.*

GOVERNOR BASTION *and Aide-de-Camp* BLOOMER.

*Gov.* Ay, Bloomer, ay, by all accounts she is a gorgeous paragon of beauty—the very salient angle of the Venus of Medicis. Zounds! the husband must mount guard night and day, or we shall carry her by a coup-de-main.

*Bloom.* The Garrison was never besieged before—she would make a saint for the Spanish army—and they would follow her as a guardian angel. When she left the boat and pressed her velvet foot to the earth, Jews, Turks, Christians, and Infidels stood with their mouths expanded in amazement, as if she commanded the opening and the shutting.

*Gov.* Ay, Bloomer, ay, this is a pretty description of her powers and our softness! No, no, Bloomer, before she should undo my soldiers I'd put out their eyes, and make them grope and grapple with the Spaniards in the dark. Zounds! we'd beat 'em blindfold.

*Bloom.* That, indeed, sir, would be making Cupids of them all.

*Air* (BLOOMER).

How can the man in love go right
When folly is his guide?
With Cupid 'tis eternal night,
And mischief's all his pride.
Who can foretell for what high cause
This darling of the gods was born?
For he who doth obey his laws
Is sure of misery and scorn.
Ah! Cupid, did it prove thee wise,
When folly put out both thy eyes?

*Enter* SERVANT.

*Serv.* Captain Lothian and Major Aptjones wait on the Governor.

*Gov.* Gentlemen, good morning to you! Have you seen the new recruits from England, with Ensign Etheridge, who is strongly recommended to me as a youth of family and fortune?

*Maj.* Yes, hur has been down to the Lant port gate, and they are as pritty fellows as the sun ever shonet upon. I have ordered the Sergeant to march them to the parade.

*Loth.* The Major's partial; the lads are in general from the ragged mountains of Merionethshire.

*Maj.* Ay, this is to be a Scotsman; hur has no ragged mountains, to be sure, in hur fertile country of Argyleshire. The Welsh lads are prave, and so are the Scots lads too: but let hur praise hur men for their toings and not for their pirths; they are poor enough porn in Wales and in Scotland too.

*Loth.* 'Tis the pride of your land is your upsetting, Major.

*Maj.* Cot knows, hur countrymen are prout enough, but they make coot soldiers, and a coot soldier is not afraid of a pullet or the pelly-ache.

*Loth.* There is no character like a soldier, nor no death like the bed of honour; but were twa bullets hurl'd through my wame, sir, I must speak my mind and praise the bonny lads of North Britain.

*Gov.* A truce to your nationality. I shall soon have occasion to expend some brave boys of all countries. The Welsh and Scotch are equally partial; the Englishman makes a friendship with all mankind; he never defends the villain of his own country, but bravely stands by the honest man, be he Turk, Jew, or Infidel. But now, gentlemen, I shall have the honour of feasting your eyes with a new beauty—the wife of Captain Lapelle.

*Maj.* The eyes of peauty was ever more fatal to the Aptjones than swort or gun.

*Loth.* Hoot! Major, hoot! what, mon, at these years to be trapped by a blind boy?

*Maj.* It is peauty that will vanquish the proudest victor. It was Cæsar of Rome, and Alexander of Macedon, that felt the plow of love, and so did King David and Catwallater of Wales.

*Bloom.* True, my gallant Major, the Welsh have ever been susceptible to the power of love; the clime of Scotland is too cold for so pure and light a flame, and the diet too barren to feed Arcadian shepherds.

*Loth.* What, sir, do you redicule the Land o' Cakes? Ar there not the pastorals of Allan Ramsay, and the elegiac tears of Ossian?

*Air* (LOTHIAN)—"Sherry Muir."

The soldier and tar should be cherish'd by war,
And not vanquish'd by sighs, tears, or beauty;
What are Love and his laws to the national cause,
And the glory of doing our duty?

*Chorus.*

Let honour and glory, then, lead on before ye,
If ye wish to be famous in story.

What are Cupid and Venus,
But fit to bemean us,
Of life the mere squibs and the rockets?
There are no ambuscades so fatal as jades,
To our credits as well as our pockets!

*Chorus.*

Let honour and glory, then, lead on before ye,
If ye wish to be famous in story.

*Gov.* Come, gentlemen, this is not a time for disputants, fall into the rear, and make room for Love and Beauty.

*Enter* CAPTAIN *and* MRS. LAPELLE, VIOLETA *as an Ensign, her servant* JESSE, *as her man servant.*

*Gov.* Mrs. Lapelle, I give you joy on your arrival! Gibraltar was never made so happy before. Captain Lapelle, Mr. Etheridge, you are welcome (*going severally to them and bowing in the manner of reception and congratulation*). I hope, madam, your passage was pleasant?

*Mrs. Lap.* Indeed, Governor, there are no thanks due from me to the god of the ocean; that turbulent Bay of Biscay made me often repent that I had undertaken so long a voyage.

*Gov.* It is the general complaint of all passengers, but the contrast gives a lustre to the Spanish climate.

*Bloom.* Beauty gives brilliancy to every climate, but what most surprises me is, how the sea could be so rude when bearing her own Venus.

*Mrs. Lap.* Upon my word, I do not lament the fatigue of the voyage, since I have gained the shore of compliments and hospitality.

*Viol.* Compliments, madam, are birds of passage, and their springes catch woodcocks in all climes.

*Bloom.* Woodcocks, sir!

*Viol.* Yes, sir, woodcocks—and you might be [illegible], were your nose longer.

*Bloom.* I don't know what cover you were sprung in, but if you don't mind your flight you'll be a good shot here.

*Viol.* I came here for the purpose, sir, nor mean I to return before I have winged a dozen cuckoos.

*Gov.* Come, come, young soldier, this snip-snap running fire won't do here. I have seen many young fellows wear their cockades as high as yours, and repent of their follies.

*Bloom.* Stick me on a chevaux-de-frise if it won't be his case too.

*Viol.* Sir!

*Bloom.* Sir!—What news have you, Mr. Etheridge, in England?

*Viol.* Nothing very new, sir; they speak English at the play-houses and Italian at the operas, and as a pretty fellow you might get into vogue, for lady-like gentlemen are all the ton.

*Bloom.* Indeed!—I'm surprised, then, how they came to spare you.

*Gov.* A truce to these squibs and crackers. I must find better entertainment for Mrs. Lapelle.

*Viol.* I believe you or your aides-de-camp may.

*Mrs. Lap.* Etheridge! are you sober?

*Viol.* Alas! dear worthy Lapelle, thou wilt have the hottest campaign here that ever soldier went through: won't he, my Lady Lapelle?

*Mrs. Lap.* You're an impertinent coxcomb!

*Viol.* You are a very pretty woman.

*Air* (MRS. LAPELLE *and* VIOLETA).

*She.*
A coxcomb's the plague of one's life,

*He.*
The plague of each pretty wife.

*She.*
I hate and detest all their airs;

*He.*
They'll kill and dispel all your cares.

*She.*
They are monkeys of men,

*He.*
Which you cannot condemn;

*She.*
They are blockheads and fools·

*He.*
But, they're made in your schools.

[*Exeunt the* LAPELLES, GOVERNOR, *and* BLOOMER, *who leads the lady off.*

LOTHIAN, APTJONES *and* JESSE, *come forward.*

*Viol.* Well, Will, how do you like the scorching sun, and this tremendous ragged rock?

*Jesse.* I think, your honour, it promises to spoil all fair faces and garden stuff: everything must be burnt to a cinder, but virtue, and that lags so in the shade it can't be scorched.

*Viol.* I thank you, Will, for the simile.

*Loth.* He is a smart chield ensign that you have brought over.

*Viol.* Well enough, as food for gunpowder goes. He will serve to expend, and will fill up a hole as well as a better man.

*Maj.* Got's plessings upon hur—hur is as smart as a carrot, and pites like a raddish.

*Viol.* My dear Taffy, where is hur peard (*mocking him*).

*Maj.* Hur peard! what does hur mean?

*Viol.* I never saw a goat on a rock without one before.

*Maj.* Splutter and puddings, does hur mean to offend hur! (*putting his hand to his sword*).

*Loth.* Zawns! Major, will ye never be cool? thou'rt as quick as bruised powder.

*Viol.* Put up hur cheese-toaster, it will serve to spit larks on half-pay.

*Loth.* I am stunn'd to see an auld fellow as sore as a minister.

*Viol.* To be sure, the blood in the Caledonian barometer does not mount so quickly. 'Tis as lazy as the case that contains it.

*Loth.* You're a parfect snap-dragon, but we'll tame you.

*Maj.* Hur is as choleric as a turkey-cock.

*Viol.* Come, come, you are veterans of service, and will forgive the folly of a young man.

*Maj.* Oh, when hur confesses hur error, hur is ready to forgive.

*Loth.* And noo, sur, what—what have you ganging forward in London?

*Viol.* I left all the Common Council of the City with as good stomachs as ever you knew them. And the Mansion House——

*Maj.* Now——

*Viol.* In the same place. I paid my tailor, too, to make him stare.

*Loth.* This is nothing to the purpose—get on.

*Viol.* First, then, I left their majesties in a good state of health, reigning in the hearts of their subjects; and the lords and commons doing wonders, and by their patriotic zeal, and large supplies, they mean to convince the world that England is a match for the four quarters.

*Loth.* Ay! ay! this is the auld spirit.

*Maj.* It is like Vesuvius, it smothers a while, and then blazes.

*Viol.* The park is fill'd with beaux of the Guards, who wear bloody stocks,—to make the world believe they are cut-throats. George's is crammed with honest soldiers, who have every advantage in life but one.

*Maj.* What is that?

*Viol.* Credit for what they want.

*Maj.* Yes, it is an old sore in the army; but the war will get over it.

*Viol.* Not if they don't get over the war.

*Maj.* Now let hur come to particulars.

*Viol.* Why, about four months ago, I had a rencontre with a woman of the first fashion, and received a deep wound.

*Maj.* In hur heart?

*Viol.* No! in hur constitution.

*Loth.* That's a worse place - a soldier only wants a heart to scale a parapet. Well, younker, gang your gait.

*Viol.* I raked—was not black-ball'd at Kenny's, where I won money without false dice. I fought a dozen duels without a wound on any side—fell in love with every woman I saw without marrying—and I am now here to fight, love, and drink with the bravest and the best. I am just going down to the Ragged Staff to see my party landed, where I shall be happy to have your company if you will do me the honour to meet me there.

*Loth.* Ay, we'll review your bonny boys, and then introduce you to the regiment. [*Exeunt* MAJOR *and* LOTHIAN.

*Viol.* Alas! dear generous Lovelace, what have I suffered for thee?—tedious journeys, tempestuous seas, and every other distress that even men might shrink at. May not this atone for my neglect and usage of thee? Oh! let me read again the dismal letter, the cause of all my woes:—

"False, cruel, perjured Violeta,—

"With suffering constancy I bore your cruelty, your neglect, your cold disdain, but now I've conquer'd, and have torn your image from my heart. I am this moment embarking as a private soldier for Gibraltar, where I hope some kind bullet will possess that heart once designed for you. Farewell eternally!—LOVELACE."

How I upbraid my cruelty and blame the folly of my mind, flattered with the idle idea of securing every heart at my pleasure! O! Lovelace! Lovelace! how unjustly I have treated thee!

*Jesse.* Alas! dear gentleman, where is he? for in vain have I inquired of every creature since we landed.

*Viol.* Break, stubborn heart—break!

*Jesse.* Oh, dear madam, remember with how many tears and entreaties I begged you not to leave England—indeed now I blame myself for yielding to your solicitations, for nothing but misery and ruin stare us in the face.

*Viol.* Then had you for ever forfeited my esteem. All my care is now for what you may endure, my dear Jesse.

*Jesse.* Oh, dearest mistress, fear not for me! if you can bear up under the difficulties that threaten us, I will support them with pleasure.

*Viol.* Come on! and since Lovelace has so highly resented the fickleness of my sex, I will be revenged on his, and quarrel with every fellow that I meet. Now will I shake all female weakness from my heart, assume the airs of a real male maccaroni, and make every coxcomb in the army stand clear of me.

*Air* (VIOLETA).

I'll cock my hat, and draw my sword,
  And be as fierce a blade
As ever swore or pawn'd his word,
  Or woo'd a willing maid.

I'll swear, I'll drink, I'll rake, I'll fight,
  Talk nonsense by the hour;
Sonnets to every beauty write,
  And riot in amour. [*Exeunt.*

[A Scene here follows, upon the Beach, where soldiers are landing from the transport ship, in which Lovelace and Halbert, with the Drummer, are the interlocutors, surrounded by trulls and camp followers. It is purposely omitted because of its wholly indifferent character.]

## ACT II.

SCENE.—*A Grove and Bower.*

BLOOMER *and* CAROLINE.

*Caro.* Is it possible I can observe your partial attentions and not be affected? Do you not watch every motion of her features, and lackey her very frowns and smiles? Have you, since the hour she arrived, ever paid me the least attention, but been ever studious to observe her inclinations and to obey them? Is this the love and constancy you have sworn? Is this the firm and everlasting testimony of your affections?

*Bloom.* Upon my word, Miss Caroline, you really are so quick in your jealousies, and so primed and loaded with unjust resentments, that you go

Air. Violetta.

I'll cock my hat, and draw my sword,
And be as fierce a Blade,
As ever swore or pawn'd his word,
Or woo'd a willing maid.

I'll swear, I'll drink, I'll rather fight, I'll fight
Talk nonsense by the hour,
In Sonnets to ev'ry Beauty write,
And riot in amours.

Exeunt.

off smack bang before one has touched the trigger. I—I—I have noticed Mrs. Lapelle with that civility so natural to my breeding, and which no well-bred man can avoid to a pretty woman; but that I have any idea of dishonour about me towards the lady is as false as my affection for you is true as my rifled-barrel pistol's to the touch of my finger.

*Caro.* Oh, such preposterous rodomontade is more insulting than your behaviour!

*Bloom.* Why, what in the name of Mars and Mercury am I to do or say? Upon my virtue—my sacred virtue, Miss Caroline—I do most sincerely love you, and every officer in the garrison has observed it, and call'd me——

*Caro.* Called you—Mr. Bloomer, called you what?

*Bloom.* Only—happy dog! and, indeed, I began to think so, till this new fracas broke out.

*Caro.* And do you really think so?

*Bloom.* Upon my honour, I not only think so, but I feel myself so enamoured and wedded to your—affections——

*Caro.* If your conduct convinces me, Bloomer, I may endeavour to believe it.

*Bloom.* Upon my word, I am very well pleased to find you have recovered your faith. It is a cursed troublesome thing that whenever people are in love, they are sure to be eternally quarrelling and pouting, to prove the ardour of their passions.

*Air* (Bloomer).

Nature had long a treasure made
  Of all her choicest store,
Fearing, when she should be decayed,
  To beg in vain for more

Love wisely had of long foreseen
  That he must once grow old,
And therefore stored a magazine
  To keep him from the cold.

Thus all his fuel did unite
  To make a fire divine,
None ever burned so hot, so bright,
  As mine for Caroline.

So we alone the happy rest,
  While all the rest is poor,
And have within ourselves possess'd
  All Love's and Nature's store.

*Caro.* And pray, Bloomer, where did you leave Mrs. Lapelle?

*Bloom.* At the Convent, where we are to have a ball, *al fresco*, and for which purpose I am come to invite my Caroline. I am to have the management of the whole business; and I flatter myself I shall dispose the variegated lamps with more taste than the Cornellys, and throw her garden into the sere leaf with my perpetual spring.

*Caro.* You're an agreeable creature, when you please.

*Bloom.* Yes, little Caro, I am that; and Mrs. Lapelle has found it out too.

*Caro.* Oh! your vanity, Bloomer, is your deformity; she has too much taste. But who, or what is she, Bloomer, for you're in every family secret.

*Bloom.* Who is she, Caro? why, a lady—who has been—a lady.

*Caro.* What, what, dear Bloomer, a lady—a lady of what?

*Bloom.* Her husband is, without exception, the most sensible, worthy, gallant fellow that ever drew a sword.

*Caro.* But what's that to her? A fiddlestick for her husband——

*Bloom.* Surely, my dear inquisitive little girl, it is a great deal for the virtues of a husband, like a mirror, to reflect the virtues of his wife.

*Caro.* But do you know who she was? or where she was born? or where she comes from? or where he got her? Come, tell me, for I am dying to know.

*Bloom.* Yes, I dare say you are. She was long his mistress, and for her exemplary behaviour he made her his wife; and a damn'd generous action it was!

*Caro.* His mistress! good heavens!

*Bloom.* Yes, identically: not that I approve of the metamorphosis, for I never

knew an instance of a good mistress making a good wife—unless for the Garrison of Gibraltar. But do now, my sweet little orange-flower, do now prepare for the Ball.

*Air* (CAROLINE)—"Through the Wood, Laddie."

O, Bloomer, nor seek thy dear Caro to tease,
For thou'rt all my pleasure,
My joy and my treasure;
And yet, thou delight'st not thy maiden to please,
Who, robbed of her lover's, deprived of her ease!
Fare thee well, Rover, &c.

time to reflect and some caution to take,
Nor thus like a feather,
The caprice of weather,
Be blown to and fro like a common town rake,
But think of the maiden who lives for thy sake.
Fare thee well, Rover, &c. [*Exit.*

*Bloom.* Yes, my little Caro,—to be sure, you love me,—and I love you, and we have plighted vows,—and if I continue in the same mind, I may marry you. But yet, I confess, this Madame Lapelle hath altered the disposition of my Army. Constancy and Fidelity—those steady sentinels of my heart—are disbanded. Truth and Sincerity were my body-guards, but they are marched into winter quarters. And as for Love and Opportunity, they are out on a recruiting party. But there is no reasoning on love; it takes everything by storm. Now for this *al fresco*—I must not sacrifice taste for the want of cash, and therefore the Jews are to supply the Garrison with five hundred moidores immediately. Yes, yes, the Jews must supply the Garrison—there is no being without ammunition, when a serious siege is laid against a man's taste, and a lady like Lapelle is to be won.

*Enter* DRUMMER.

*Drum.* Sir, here's the last young Ensign from England without, who says he will see you whether you'll be seen or not. I told him you were engaged with a lady; he said that was still a greater reason why he would come in. Egad! such a fellow, your honour, would be in the court-way before you could make a sally. Here he is.

*Enter* VIOLETA.

*Viol.* Your servant, sir.
*Bloom.* Your servant, sir.
*Viol.* You had a lady here, sir?
*Bloom.* I had, sir,—what might you want with her?
*Viol.* To make love to her.
*Bloom.* 'Tis very concise, sir.
*Viol.* 'Tis a way I have, sir.
*Bloom.* You seem, sir, to be a spark of the true celestial fire. Did you ever cudgel a scoundrel?
*Viol.* Twenty.
*Bloom.* Without an effort of resistance?
*Viol.* Peaceable as martyrs.
*Bloom.* Then, sir, I have a job at hand shall make your list of flagellation twenty-two.
*Viol.* Come on—blows and rencontres are the joys of my soul.
*Bloom.* You must know I have borrowed five hundred moidores of two scoundrels of usuring Jews.

*Viol.* Not a word more. I am used to the work. I was whitewash'd the last act of grace for four thousand—half-pay and all.

*Bloom.* Drummer, bid the Jews, Pottifar and Absalom, come in.

*Enter* JEWS.

*Drum.* (*mocking*). Here, gentlemans, this is the Jerusalem Chambers. I wish I had thy wife, 'pothecary, and Absalom was hung on a tree (*aside*).

*Pot.* Your servants, Captains—here be little Absaloms and Is, with de moneys which I have hads from Cales——

*Bloom.* It is no matter, if you had it from the Devil, I must have it.

*Pot.* Five per cents. and twenty moidores presents, my good Captain.

*Bloom.* Yes, yes, I don't object—it is a forced march with me.

*Pot.* You wants de silk stockings—Absalom has good ones.

*Bloom.* No: damn me if I want a stocking.

*Pot.* Yes, you must take ten pounds in stockings. Gentlemans always wants stockings.

*Viol.* But, Jew, how do you know they will fit? Bloomer, I say, you shan't take a stocking.

*Pot.* Yes, he must take the stockings, or I takes away de moneys.

*Bloom.* Damn his stockings—I'll take them, fit or not fit.

*Viol.* You shan't draw one of them on.

*Bloom.* I will. Drummer, take the cash.

*Drum.* Yes, and I'll keep it as safe as the Jews of Venice.

*Bloom.* Now, sir, I'll try the length of your sword, whether I shall or shall not wear his stockings.

*Viol.* With all my heart—come on. (*They draw and push.*)

[POTTIFAR *falls down between them on his knees.*

*Pot.* Oh! for the sake of the great Gods—don't fights till I have insured your lifes.

*Viol.* Away, Dives—I'll kill him dead as Nebuchadnezzar!

*Enter* MAJOR APTJONES *suddenly.*

*Maj.* Plood and confusion—is hur always a-fighting?—'tis pity hur was not in America. A few Guards, or Punker's Hill, would cool hur plood for hur. What is the cause of hur drawing her sworts?

*Bloom.* These Judæan scoundrels, Major, wanted to pick my pocket of twenty pieces.

*Maj.* They are de thieves of the earth: from an old pair of preeches to a pound. Hur is sure to be a knave. I'll have them drummed out of the Garrison.

*Pot.* For the great God's sake, Major, spare little Pottifar and drum out Absaloms, who wanted to cheats the gentlemans.

*Maj.* Get hur to hur synagogue, or I will hur to a gaol.

*Pot.* The tribe of Israels pray for the Major and the Governor. [*Exeunt.*

*Maj.* Well, what has hur to say for hurself now?

*Viol.* I have been ill-treated by this feather of a soldier, and unless he makes the *amende honorable*, I can't put up with the affront.

*Maj.* To all quarrels everypoty is in fault, and therefore you must beg one another's partons. 'Tis the best excuse to hur lives. Shake hants; kiss and be friends, and I will then introduce hur to the mass.

*Viol.* On your account, Major, I will look it over. But let every man take care how he affronts Ensign Etheridge.

*Enter* JESSE.

*Jesse.* I am desired to inform you, gentlemen, the drum hath beat to dinner.

[*Exeunt* BLOOMER, VIOLETA, *and* MAJOR.

DRUMMER *and* JESSE *come forward.*

*Jesse.* These are hard times, comrade.

*Drum.* Only with those who choose to make 'em so, my little smock-faced valet.

*Jesse.* Drummer, can you keep a secret?

*Drum.* 'Tis part of my profession—but more difficult to keep than my money.

*Jesse.* That I believe; but you're not entrusted with enough of either to give you any consequence.

*Drum.* There's your mistake, my little cream-coloured plate; for my knapsack has all the intrigues of the Garrison in it, and my supplies enable me to keep a bevy of beauties. I am the next man in this place to the Governor.

*Jesse.* How so?

*Drum.* By being in the cabinet council of all. I am received at all hours; and, like the true god of love, I shut my eyes.

*Jesse.* Then you hear all, see nothing, and say less.

*Drum.* Muffle's the word.

*Jesse.* Do you know my master means to make love to Miss Caroline?

*Drum.* He may. The quarters are dear.

*Jesse.* How? Does not Bloomer kneel there?

*Drum.* No. He's after Madam Lapelle—and Caroline's after him. Love's like hunting, when one flies, t'other pursues.

*Jesse.* So I believe, and we have experienced that most infernally in our family.

*Drum.* In what manner?

*Jesse.* My master left England for love, and I too.

*Drum.* 'Tis a cursed disorder, and seems to have sweated you down to the size of a drum-stick. Drink black-strap and get into flesh; nor snivel away your time like a whining Italian.

*Jesse.* I have lost my brother.

*Drum.* Well, if he died like a soldier in battle, a prince might envy him his fall.

*Jesse.* No, he's not dead, he is in this Garrison: could you help me to find him?

*Drum.* That I will, if love has not disguised him as much as you. What's his name?

*Jesse.* Lovelace, and a handsome youth he is.

*Drum.* Yes, a family ought to be handsome with so much love in it. Well, I'll pick him out, and turn that dismal face into smiles.

*Air* (DRUMMER *and* JESSE).

*Drummer.*

Ye gods! what a plague to the soul of a man
 Is that tickling urchin of love!
If the life of the longest is only a span,
 How short must a soldier's, then, prove!

*Jesse.*

What contests hath he with the seas and the wars!
 A prey to the sword and the gun;
His fame is increased by his number of scars—
 By peace he is only undone.

*Both.*

Ye heroes of arms, whether soldier or tar,
  Attend, and this maxim approve,
The soldier's bright star is the great god of war,
  And he is the true god of war! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment, discovering* CAPTAIN *and* MRS. LAPELLE *seated.*

*Lap.* Dearest lady, I flatter myself that universal tenderness which I have shown you for a series of years has made so happy an impression on your mind that any admonitions or cautions which I may find necessary to give you will meet with that approbation which your good sense entitles it to. I have observed——

*Mrs. Lap.* Well, what have you observed? Bless me, Captain Lapelle, you are going to preach,—and you know how much I hate it!

*Lap.* Preach, madam! Is it preaching to tell a wife of her danger, when she is giving liberties—that may do her great discredit?

*Mrs. Lap.* Liberties! I shouldn't have thought of that—liberties!

*Lap.* Yes, liberties, madam!—and such as neither your reputation nor my honour will permit.

*Mrs. Lap.* Reputation—honour—I don't understand you, sir!

*Lap.* Then madam, you shall. The freedoms, Mrs. Lapelle, which you have suffered that insignificant coxcomb, Bloomer, to take with you neither become the dignity of a wife to suffer nor of a husband to bear.

*Mrs. Lap.* What! a woman is not to suffer the polite addresses of a pretty fellow, truly, but it is to throw a husband into a fit of jealous vapours?

*Lap.* Do you call such addresses warrantable?

*Mrs. Lap.* Warrantable!—yes, very much so.

*Lap.* Is it, madam, consistent with the character of my wife to suffer an impertinent, frothy fop to kiss her at his will?

*Mrs. Lap.* Kiss her!—and where's the harm of that? what can be more innocent than a simple kiss?

*Lap.* So, Mrs. Lapelle, you laugh at it,—you laugh at it, madam

*Mrs. Lap.* My dear doting *caro sposo*, would you have me cry at it?

*Lap.* Madam, you have been here a short time, and your head has been turned with a universal deluge of flattery; and if, madam, you cannot so conduct yourself as to reflect honour upon yourself and upon me, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of taking a step that may be very distasteful to you.

*Mrs. Lap.* You may take such steps as you please, sir; I have no ill-meaning in my behaviour, and I shall be very attentive to those who are polite and attentive to me.

*Air* (MRS. LAPELLE).

Ye belles and ye flirts, pray who'd be a wife,
If each whim of her husband's to torture her life?
For surely these days a new fashion approve,
And all but her husband a lady may love.

Wedlock's now a release from mammas and old aunts;
A spouse must supply all a fine lady wants;
A husband is but the convenience of life—
He may be the friend, not the flirt of a wife.

[*Enter* CAROLINE *and* BLOOMER *with a fine bouquet.*

CAPTAIN *and* MRS. LAPELLE, CAROLINE *and* BLOOMER.

*Bloom.* (*walking hastily up to* MRS. LAPELLE, *presents her with a nosegay*).

I have ransacked every garden in Gibraltar to procure this bouquet for your acceptance, and for the high gratification of presenting it on my bended knee.

*Mrs. Lap.* Dear Mr. Bloomer, you do me infinite honour.

*Caro.* I suppose the Garrison, sir, would not afford two nosegays?

*Bloom.* No; platoon me to death with puns, Miss Caroline, if it would.

*Mrs. Lap.* Poor girl! 'tis a pity to tease her, for she's in love with the fellow—and yet a Turk may as well part with the favourite of his harem as a pretty woman with an agreeable flatterer. Miss Caroline, will you accept the bouquet?

*Bloom.* Now, there's a piece of complaisance!

*Caro.* O, madam, by no means,—I must beg your pardon——

*Bloom.* That's better on her side than I expected. O, dear Lady Lapelle, you are the real Flora it belongs to! Nature produced it for your bosom, and blushed that it was not better.

*Lap.* Upon my word, sir, your compliments are so very flowery and ready, that the hotbed of your imagination must be well supplied.

*Bloom.* Supplied, sir—supplied with what, sir?

*Lap.* With materials for raising mushrooms.

*Mrs. Lap.* I am astonished, Captain Lapelle, at your indelicacy; such false notions and absurd prejudices make you ridiculous!

*Lap.* I am more astonished, Mrs. Lapelle, at the encouragement that you give to every meteor of a spark that wishes to borrow fire from your eyes.

*Air* (Mrs. Lapelle).

When maids, we tease our mothers' hearts,
Perpetually in love;
Or use a thousand little arts
Their jealousies to move.

A husband is our only care,
And when the man we've got,
Like game entangled in a snare,
We toil to break the knot.

[Mrs. Lapelle *handed off by* Bloomer.

Captain Lapelle *and* Caroline.

*Lap.* I could not have believed it possible that so amiable, so sensible a woman, who for a series of years has been a pattern of domestic virtue, could have been so unguarded. O insupportable infatuation!

*Caro.* Alas! I fear it is but too true. I have with the deepest sorrow marked and bewailed it. O fickle, false, insidious Bloomer!

*Lap.* Ah, fair lady! and—and—has the attachment been so palpable?

*Caro.* Indeed, Captain Lapelle, it would be the height of perfidy in me to alarm your mind with any ungenerous suspicions—but I have seen——

*Lap.* O, madam, I have seen enough already to make advancing dangerous. I entreat you to proceed.

*Caro.* It is too plain that I am miserable,—Bloomer false,—and she untrue!

*Lap.* O base degenerate enchantress! Not content with the ruin of her own reputation, the world's opinion, and my peace—but to rob so fair a lady of her love! It is adding crime to crime. What is become of conjugal honour, once the radiant star of England? Have vice and folly and a loose intercourse with France perverted all our honourable manners to the most paltry foppery of folly? O England! England! while the salt sea confined thy natives at home, thy sons were valiant and thy daughters virtuous. By all the gods, he shall experience the force of my resentment!

*Caro.* I do beseech you, sir, to bear awhile this tide of injury; some lucky moment may destroy the tie, and snatch her from the brink of ruin she thus braves. O my fond credulity! what hast thou betrayed me to?

*Lap.* Alas! fair maid, this injury is double; she knew too well the love you

bore to Bloomer, and gloried in the captivation. Ungrateful woman! Did I not love her, then I might be happy; but she is twined so close about my heart that death alone can shake her off.

*Caro.* Be moderate, sir; we both may be deceived. Perhaps it's but a sudden turn of giddiness, which your calm admonitions may adjust, and bring her back to home and calm reflection. More women are influenced by little vanities, and by the hope of conquest over their admirers, than stirred by passions to commit an error.

*Lap.* What unequalled tenderness! Alas! fair maid, our lots are mutually unfortunate. Might not some stratagem awake her virtue, and his love to you? Suppose this eve, at the ball, we assume a more lively air than usual: I'll pay a constant attention to some other lady, and do you encourage the addresses of Etheridge; thus, playing off the one against the other, you may recover the inconstant soldier, and I bring back the wandering deer.

*Caro.* With all my heart. But yet how difficult a task, to dress a face in smiles and wear a heavy heart! But to regain the wanton flown there's not a thing in life I would not do,—to constitute your felicity, and prevent her shame.

*Air* (CAROLINE)—"Kate of Aberdeen."

Should the fond dove a wanton grow
And sigh to change her grove,
By sad experience she may know
The loss of mutual love.

If, tired of constancy and truth,
The country she explores,
May not her inexperienced youth
Wreck her on Syren shores?

For, while she leaves her brooding mate,
And tries the varying scene,
How hard may be her hapless fate!
What woes may intervene!

May she not in her varied range
Each sad disaster prove,
And, wounded, grieve the fatal change,
The loss of mutual love?

[*Exeunt.*

*Scene opens and discovers a Regiment at Mess.* MAJOR APTJONES *at the head of the table.* LOTHIAN *and* VIOLETA *sitting next the audience, and opposite: with other officers. Chorus, as after a song.*

"When ye come to Gibraltar,
Your notes will soon alter,
With plenty of claret and Bumper Squire Jones."

*Aptjones.* Come, here's a pumper to the health of hur Majesties, and may the trade and arms of Great Pritain flourish for ever!

*Viol.* With all my heart. Fill round. (*Sings*) "With plenty of claret and Bumper Squire Jones."

*Aptjones.* Come, Ensign Etheridge, as hur is a stranger, give hur a toast.

*Viol.* May he that flinches at a breast-work fall in the covert-way.

*Loth.* 'Tis a guid military sentiment, and gives a smack to the liquor.

*Maj.* Let us have a peauty; 'tis love and wine that makes a soldier's face as good a scarlet as his coat, for a soldier should look fierce as well as be fierce.

*Viol.* True, major, courage becomes a soldier, but there is no occasion to hang out the sign of the Red Lion of Brentford. Come, give us a Spanish donna—a duenna, if you will, for fashion has made an old woman all the mode now. Lothian, have you no lass that has danced a reel on her linen by the side of some rapid burn?

*Loth.* Ay, ay, Maister Etheridge, those are the bonny things of the North. I'll give you the Highland Queen——

*Viol.* (*bursts into laughter*). What! Mary Queen of Scots?

*Enter* HALBERT.

*Hal.* I have the Governor's orders to inform the gentlemen of the regiment that he will be happy to have their company at the ball. Ensign Etheridge, your party, sir, will be ready to review to-morrow morning.

*Viol.* Very well, sergeant, I will be on the ground; but I must first reconnoitre the recruits at the Convent.

*Maj.* Sergeant Halbert is an orderly guid man, and does hur duty like a soldier; give hur a glass of wine, and the sergeant will give us a new song, made by a prave fellow of the 24th. Come, sergeant, sing to hur regiment.

*Air* (HALBERT).

While the vine's balmy juice my troubles destroy,
  O Bacchus, thy bounty dispense!
But ne'er, mighty God, let the liquor of joy,
  Like Lethe's, deprive us of sense.

When love's tender passion my bosom alarms,
  Grant, Venus, some beautiful fair;
But O, never make me a slave to her charms,
  Nor poison my pleasure with care!

These cordials of Heaven by fools are abused,
  And turned to the fountains of strife;
'Tis by wise men alone that, when rightly they're used,
  Love and wine are the blessings of life.

*Scene closes in the Company; but* VIOLETA *and* HALBERT *advance.*

*Viol.* Well, sergeant, what do you think of my party?

*Hal.* They are fine fresh lads, sir, and will drill into fine smart fellows.

*Viol.* I believe, Halbert, I shall want a little practice with you, for my experience has not extended farther than the bows of a page, and drinking at the St. James's Coffee-house.

*Hal.* O, sir, what I have seen of you already convinces me that you are infinitely superior to the borough election officers we have daily remitted here.

*Viol.* Well, I will be punctually at the exercise-ground in the morning, and as good a soldier as mounting guard at the Opera-house can make a pretty fellow. [*Exit.*

DRUMMER *passing the stage.*

*Hal.* Halt! where so fast, my little striped zebra?

*Drum.* That's making me no better that an ass, sergeant.

*Hal.* But thou'lt allow it to be a fine ass—it is an ass of the Court.

*Drum.* An ass is an ass, whether of Court or country. I don't think the reflection less whether a man's an ass in rags or lace: and therefore, sergeant, send your ass into Spain; for the Spanish King is fond of their services (*going*).

*Hal.* But why in such a hurry?

*Drum.* I have business enough, and more than haste and honesty can fulfil.

*Hal.* You've a dance to-night; I shall be there with the guard; don't you forget to smuggle a bottle, with a little good peck, to close the orifice of the stomach. Great men, Drummer, play into one another's hands. Always imitate your superiors.

*Air* (HALBERT).

Who the devil, pray, would be a sergeant,
For to drill and attend on these wargent!
To turn out their toes,
Cock their hats, clean their clothes,
And with pockets without the true argent!

*As they exeunt, the Scene unfolds, displaying a Superb Garden, with Variegated Lamps, and a great Company of Officers and Ladies. At the upper end of the Stage two Palm-trees are distinguishable, with the Sea extending beyond the Garden, while across the water the Coast of Spain is observable at a considerable distance. Music finishes, as after dancing.*

CAROLINE *and* VIOLETA *come forward.*

*Caro.* Upon my word, sir, you are very free and familiar in your opinion of us and our place. It must be downright prejudice, Mr. Etheridge; you can have no real knowledge of either our modes or our manners.

*Viol.* In a moment, my pretty sprig of Spanish jessamine, I can squint through the manners of a town; it is my trade. I served as regular an apprenticeship to it as a lump of a country boy to weigh sugar and rice in the city.

*Caro.* An apprenticeship—where, sir?

*Viol.* At Court.

*Caro.* That is the last place, Mr. Etheridge, to learn any vicious habits in; it is the asylum of innocence and conjugal love.

*Viol.* Madam, you're mistaken; that circle is a magic ring, where I had the honour of being a page, and where I learnt the language of the looks and sighs, or I had not so soon discovered those little cupids dancing in your bright eyes.

*Caro.* Upon my word! you are very plain, very flattering, and very insincere.

*Viol.* Yes, we have dropped all form and stiffness; ceremony is the worst mark of ill-breeding—Paris has taught us better; we come slapdash to the question at once, and carry off a woman before she has time to reflect.

*Caro.* Any new fashions, Mr. Etheridge?—you seem to be a fop of the ton.

*Viol.* This is the last polonaise frock, after Beau Butterfly; this is the last smart cock; this is the new genteel walking air; we bow thus, and ogle thus, and run away with a beauty thus. (*Takes her round the waist and mixes in the crowd.*)

[CAPTAIN LAPELLE *is seen to take very particular notice of a lady.* BLOOMER *and* MRS. LAPELLE *come forward.*

*Mrs. Lap.* Didn't you observe Lapelle's attention to Mrs. Wilmot?

*Bloom.* And didn't you observe Etheridge's addresses to Caroline?

*Mrs. Lap.* Yes, yes, yes, I see how it is; but I will never suffer or support it.

*Bloom.* Nor I—damn the coxcomb! I hate a coxcomb. I'll challenge him.

*Mrs. Lap.* And I will instantly put an end to their flirtation.

*Bloom.* And I'll put an end to him or myself—damn the coxcomb!

(*They mix with the crowd.*)

*Gov.* Ladies and gentlemen, make room for the new group of elegant Italian dancers—and then for supper. Music, strike up!

[*A grand Ballet finishes Second Act.*

## ACT III.

SCENE.—*The Drill Ground.*

*Soldiers with their firelocks, carefully dispersed.* SERVANT *and* DRUMMER *talking to each other.* LOVELACE *comes forward leaning on his firelock.*

*Love.* Despair and grief must end my hated life. What have I left for the false, disdainful Violeta? Fortune, friends, and everything that made life pleasing and society endearing. Oh! could my conscience admit a thought of suicide, I would hasten death. But no laws, human or divine, can reconcile self-murder. Ah! Violeta, thou yet must reign my sharp tormentor.

*Air* (LOVELACE).

Though ruined my fortune, my peace, and my fame,
I cannot against her unkindly exclaim:
And yet wear the willow, the badge of my shame—
Oh the green willow, the badge of my shame!

Though she scorned my love, her name I adore,
And her beauties I'll praise, though I ne'er see them more:
Yet wear the sad willow, and sigh down the shore—
Oh wear the green willow, and sigh down the shore!

Ah! maiden, to rend a poor heart with despair,
Whose love and sincerity caused all its care,
And brought the possessor the willow to wear—
Alack, woe-is-me, the willow to wear!

Ah! well may ye blame me thus madly to rove,
And for one that's so false still continue to love,
And for her wear the willow whom plaints cannot move—
The garland of sorrow, which beauty hath wove.

[HALBERT *and* DRUMMER *coming up to him.*

*Hal.* What! comrade, still in the dumps? Won't Spanish wine and new beauties enliven thee? Thou'rt a dull mixture for a soldier!

*Love.* I have had misfortunes, and was trepanned to 'list by some merciless monsters who ply about Charing Cross to devour the innocent and unwary.

*Drum.* What! you were not fairly beat up—the volunteer to a sheepskin? It is a shame, in a free country, that such kidnappers should be suffered, or that the Savoy should receive the bones of an honest fellow.

*Hal.* Come, come, my brave boy, we shall soon get rid of these quarters for you, and make you as light and gay as a grenadier's feather. It is well those kidnapping alligators didn't ship you for the East Indies, where you had not been a champ for a crocodile. Here's Drum will show you what life is here, and how a gentleman soldier makes sixpence go farther than a vulgar fellow can half-a-crown.

*Drum.* Showing will not signify anything, unless you can get a little priming into him,—wet powder won't go off.

*Hal.* I like the looks of the lad, so I'll teach him his exercise myself, and the joys of the army.

*Air* (HALBERT).

Do poets record
A dull tradesman or lord?
They're not worth the dip of their pen;

'Tis the soldiers of glory
Are famous in story,
For they are the heroes of men.

They're the pride of each wench,
And the fear of the French—
The dread of all Old England's foes :
They have no cares to vex,
No bad debts to perplex—
The King finds them money and clothes.

*Drum.* Now for tossing the brown musket—here comes our officer.

*Hal.* Order there !—fall back !—stand to your arms ! (*The party form a line.*)

*Drum.* Now for my rub-a-dub (*takes and slings his drum*). How sounds may be produced ! The skin of the sheep, which makes the music (*striking the drum*), when alive only cried ba !——— and though the most harmless animal of the creation, yet, when manufactured into parchment, supplies lawyers with deeds and armies with drums—the certain instruments of fraud and murder.

*Enter* VIOLETA, *and* JESSE *with the spontoon.*

*Viol.* Well, Sergeant, are we all here, and sober ? (*Takes the spontoon.*)

*Hal.* Yes, your honour, perfectly sober.

*Viol.* Come, Halbert, give me a few hints (*aside*).

*Hal.* Remember, sir, to take long strides, and every now and then look round with an air of contempt, stick your spontoon in the ground, shake your head, and with a loud voice command silence.

*Viol.* Silence ! I say.

*Hal.* Now give your spontoon to your boy, take snuff affectedly, flourish your cane, swear as you please—and these are as many qualities as a gentleman requires to make a tolerable soldier.

*Viol.* Is that an attitude for a soldier, sirrah ? (*To a second*) Who cocked your hat, dog ? (*To another*) I'll teach you to wear such a stock, villain ! (*To another*) How came you into the field, scoundrel ! with a dirty shirt ? Do you think his Majesty allows you the luxury of sixpence a day to stuff vulgar meat and drink. (*To* LOVELACE) What a boor of a clown have we here ! carry your firelock thus,—and your head thus, or I'll knock it off your shoulders, monster !

*Love.* Oh, my lucky stars, what a coxcomb's here !

*Hal.* A major of twenty years' standing could not have done better.

*Jesse.* What a spirit she has ! Were she known in the city, she would puzzle the brokers more about the quality of her sex than the most artful chevalier of the kingdom of France. Now for't !

*Hal.* Now, sir, for the word of command !

*Viol.* What shall I do for the words ? (*aside to* HALBERT).

*Hal.* Oh, sir, an officer wants no words—only speak as if your mouth was full of pudding ; they'll know the motion by the drill corporal.

*Viol.* Have a care——bo—boo ! very well——bo—boo !——boo !——all together there !

*Hal.* Mind the drill corporal.

*Viol.* (*to* LOVELACE). If you don't mind the word given, I'll knock you down, scoundrel !

*Hal.* Oh ! that passion is very graceful, sir, and the true quality of a martinet.

*Viol.* Ready — bo — boo !——scoundrels ! rascals ! mongrel dogs ! (*Strikes* LOVELACE.) I'll have thee, villain, tied to the halberds directly !

*Love.* My soul's above a blow. Rascal as thou art—have at thy life! (*Attempts to stab* VIOLETA *with his bayonet. The* SERGEANT *knocks the piece out of his hand and seizes him.*)

*Hal.* This is mutiny! The court-martial's sitting—drag him to the court! Thou wilt be shot immediately.

*Love.* I don't care how soon, for I am sick of life.

*Jesse.* O ye gods, what an escape was this!

*Viol.* Away with the bloody-minded villain! I'll see him executed.

*Love.* Were I at liberty, I would first execute thee.

*Jesse.* Pray secure the wretch, that he don't get loose.

*Hal.* Corporal, march in front, and two in the rear. If he attempts to break from you, kill him dead.

*Drum.* Shall I beat the funeral?

*Hal.* March! [*Exeunt all but* JESSE *and* VIOLETA.

*Jesse.* Oh, dearest lady, what risks you do run! I am all in a tremor. What could inspire you with such intrepidity?—or what could provoke you to venture such a danger?

*Viol.* Revenge—for the loss of my unhappy Lovelace, and for his injuries! I'll persecute all the sex—lose my own life—or find the hapless wanderer!

*Jesse.* Oh, for the sake of pity, drop these violent resolutions—throw yourself at the Governor's feet—declare yourself a woman—and solicit his protection!

*Viol.* No—no—I'll have the rank of colonel first, and show the lazy breed of Park soldiers that the softer sex is not so soft as they. I'll have a regiment, and make thee a captain—thou wilt not discredit thy colours, wench!

*Jesse.* I declare, madam, your spirit gives me courage.

*Air* (JESSE)—"Daniel Cooper."

No wonder girls in country towns
With soldiers gay are smitten;
No wonder, too, that country clowns
By them so oft are bitten.
The smart cockade,
The gay parade,
May well allure the farmer ·
'Twill lead him on
To sword and gun,
And make him quit his charmer.

Who can resist the scarlet coat,
Or turn on sons of glory?
'Twas Paris the fair Helen brought
To Troy—as told in story.
From that to this
Each blooming Miss
Hath helped the hero's duty;
And sons of arms
Have owned our charms—
The power of Love and Beauty!

*Enter* BLOOMER.

*Bloom.* (*to* ETHERIDGE). You have been out with your party. I am weary with the business of last night. It was a cursed bore.

*Viol.* It did not appear so.

*Bloom.* A very dull bore indeed! But one must sacrifice to the whims of a fine woman. You danced with Caroline, I think?

*Viol.* I had that honour, sir.

*Bloom.* Yes, she is a pleasing girl.

*Viol.* A most accomplished woman.

*Bloom.* I am glad our sentiments accord. Do you like Caroline, Etheridge?

*Viol.* Yes, she has that about her that will captivate.

*Bloom.* O yes, she has it about her—the girl's well enough.

*Viol.* Yes, in general—they make them so now.

*Bloom.* Do you think of her further than a flirtation or two?

*Viol.* That depends upon her attentions.

*Bloom.* I thought you were sweet upon her—she is pretty.

*Viol.* I flattered her a little, and you flattered Lapelle—not a little.

"Air Jesse — Daniel Cooper"

No wonder Girls in Country Towns,
with Soldiers gay are smitten;
No wonder too that Country Clowns,
By them so oft [illegible]
Have own'd our charms;
The pow'r of love & Beauty.

Add. A 1. 25. 92*
ff. 47 & 48.

*Love.* My soul's above a blow. Rascal as thou art—have at thy life! (*Attempts to stab* VIOLETA *with his bayonet. The* SERGEANT *knocks the piece out of his hand and seizes him.*)

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May well allure the farmer•
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To sword and gun,
And make him quit his charmer.

Who can resist the scarlet coat,
Or turn on sons of glory?
'Twas Paris the fair Helen brought
To Troy—as told in story.
From that to this
Each blooming Miss
Hath helped the hero's duty;
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2.

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Add. A.1.25:92
ff 47 & 48.

*Bloom.* A gentleman's under an obligation of attention to these neglected wives.

*Viol.* Neglected wives! come, come, Mr. Bloomer, I must throw aside the mask and assure you that no lady in the land is so little neglected as Mrs. Lapelle—who possesses a husband, one of the first ornaments of the army and society; nor does your particular attention, sir, to that lady become your situation or her character. Husbands, Mr. Bloomer, are too often so critically situated that they cannot take up these matters properly; you must desist, sir, in your bows and attentions to her, or I shall inform him who will add your bones to the petrifactions at Europa Point.

*Bloom.* What the devil's the matter with you now? You're as full of fire as the electrical eel.

*Viol.* I am, sir! and will touch the torpedo part of your disposition, or any man's disposition, who dares to invade the peace and felicity of a worthy family. I am going to attend the court martial—and then, sir, I shall send Captain Lapelle to attend you.

*Air* (VIOLETA.)

Would wives consult their dignity and fame,
The price of honour, and a virtuous name,
They'd never sacrifice to fools
And throw themselves away;
But follow Virtue's hallow'd rules,
Nor let such meteors lead astray.

[*Exit* VIOLETA.

*Bloom.* Gunpowder! I must mind the manœuvres of this youth, or he'll rescue the Lapelle and walk off with Caroline. Here, you fellow, your master's servant. Where the devil does your master come from? where was he born?—for he's the hottest spark——

*Jesse.* Yes, sir, he is of a very hot quality. I very often feel the fever of his fury. His mother was a very passionate woman, sir, and his father a very tiger.

*Bloom.* O, I find then he has it on both sides. I can tell you one thing, boy—and if you regard him you may tell him this also—that if he does not lower his sail a little, he will be whipped through the lungs as sure as he is alive.

*Jesse.* That will not be an easy matter, sir—for he is a special swordsman, and is supposed to thrust better than any man in the county of Galway.

[*Puts herself in a fencing attitude.*

*Bloom.* Galway! and I suppose a member of Lucas's. Coventry must be his residence, and soliloquies his amusement.

*Air* (BLOOMER.)

There's not a place around the world,
Where fate or chance hath soldiers hurl'd
At once to cool, to tame and settle
The boiling blood in sparks of mettle
Like a trip to Coventry.

Though masters, books, and moral rules
The lash and lumber of the schools
May fail—yet still we oft discover
Amendment in the Buck and Lover,
By a trip to Coventry.

SCENE.—*A Room.*

CAPTAIN *and* MRS. LAPELLE.

*Lap.* I am determined, Mrs. Lapelle, to remove you from this place;

the career you are driving with this young fop is a dishonour to your age, your character, and fame.

*Mrs. Lap.* Age, sir!

*Lap.* Yes, age, madam! Your native bloom by the hand of time is swept from your pallid cheek, which you have supplied with art. I blush to mention this, madam; but fashion has established this disgraceful custom. O fie! fie, to hang out false colours, like a common Syren. Is this well done?

*Mrs. Lap.* This, sir, is a rudeness I am unused to, and which I will not bear.

*Lap.* This you shall bear, madam; nay, and ten times more, unless you will alter this eccentric conduct. The honour of my house, madam, is equal to the honour of my character, nor shall either be sullied while I've a hand to defend one and a mind to support the other.

*Mrs. Lap.* You have indeed, sir, thrown yourself into a violent rage: and for what—I am at a loss to explain!

*Lap.* Madam, I will not be trifled with—I have seen enough to convince me that the looseness of your behaviour has discredited me, and drawn the reflections of the world upon you.

*Mrs. Lap.* The world! I despise the world—the bugbear you always introduce to awe us. I have done nothing, sir, that can reflect dishonour; I feel my innocence, and I defy the public calumny. The world!

*Lap.* Without the countenance of that world you so contemptuously despise, a situation in society, madam, is narrow and irksome. Remember, madam, the pains I took to raise you in the world's opinion; and will you, Mrs. Lapelle, in a few days destroy and ruin what I have laboured for years to accomplish? Is this your gratitude?

*Mrs. Lap.* My gratitude I own. But, as my intentions are innocent in regard to Mr. Bloomer, there is nothing you can do, sir, that shall make me alter my opinion or my behaviour. Platonic friendship——

*Lap.* Platonic nonsense!—the idle romantic phrenzy of a false philosopher, who, to prove his ability, has aimed at reconciling the absurdest contradictions of nature. The system, madam, may do in the sere leaf of life, but not with youth and beauty. 'Tis incompatible and unnatural.

*Mrs. Lap.* Heavens! what a man!—to attempt to depreciate the fame of the inimitable Eloisa. Sir, the friend of that school you so condemn is what I have ever wished to find in life.

*Lap.* That friend you have in your loving husband, without that school.

*Mrs. Lap.* No, sir, these friendships are distinct; to you I owe in duty, love—but surely I may have a pure and virtuous friendship for another without abating my affection for you.

*Lap.* This, madam, is trifling with me. To prove the strength of this friendship, see, see, Mrs. Lapelle, your own letter.

*Mrs. Lap.* (*falls on her knees*). O, I confess my error. O pardon and forgive me—with the humblest contrition I now beseech it.

*Lap.* Rise, dear lady; there is not a favour you can ask I can refuse; be this the future beacon to your conduct, and now avoid the coast you were so nearly wrecked on.

*Mrs. Lap.* O, exemplary goodness! Never from this moment will I sport with the affections of him to whom I owe every blessing and honour. Forgive me, dear Lapelle.

*Lap.* I do; dry those tears which I but now made flow, and which I hope may never stream again.

*Air* (Mrs. Lapelle)

Would ye, ye wives, this lesson prove,
 You ne'er would sink in shame,
Make pride the sentinel of love
 And guardian of your fame.

The pride of every female breast,
 Should be reproach to shun.
She that is pure in mind is blest;
 If false, she is undone. [*Exeunt.*

*Scene changes to the Street before the Court-Martial Room.*

*Enter* HALBERT, *and* DRUMMER, *with* LOVELACE *as a prisoner, Guard, &c.*

*Hal.* I never felt my heart relax for a comrade before, when he had committed a capital offence; but there is something about thee that moves the hardness of my disposition, because I fear there is no hope of saving thee. Thine is the supreme crime in the army.

*Love.* Your concern for me betrays the humanity of your heart. I thank you for your affection, but death is more welcome to me than life.

*Drum.* It would be a long time before I could persuade myself to think so; but I fear there's no more chance for thee than for the head of my drum against the point of a sharp knife. Mutiny to an officer is a deadly stroke, I remember I received 400 lashes once for a sort of speech I made on a march.

*Hal.* How so, Drummer?

*Drum.* We were padding the hoof, all over dirt and sweat, at the Retreat at St. Cas, where a good pair of heels was of vast service to a man: so says a comrade to me, seeing the officers ride "Let's pull them off their horses. Zounds! shall they ride and we walk?" "Be quiet," replies I; "if they don't ride horses, they'll ride us." Egad! as soon as we had escaped the bayonet, they tickled my back with the hands of two brother drums—400—and laid it in as close as wax.

*Lov.* Thou'rt a cheerful, happy lad, and may prosper. I am pleased with my condition—nor do I repine at the expected fate.

*Air.*—(LOVELACE.)

The world hath lost its charms for me;
  Beauty like Truth's no more;
My mirth is changed for misery—
  She's false whom I adore.

Angels are not more fair above,
  In each exterior part;
But angels are more true in love,
  And wear a purer heart.

*Drum.* Zounds! my brave fellow, don't let the idea of a bullet kill thee before thou'rt shot. If this breath of life is so irksome, the sooner it's let out the better. Come! come, I hate to see a fine fellow chap-fallen. Brace up, my buck! there's good sound in thee yet.

*Air* (DRUMMER) "There was a Mouse lived in a Mill."

(*Kettledrums and Flutes*)

We've bright blue eyes about the town,
Whose rigdum will decoy ye;
And buxom damsels, fair and brown,
With a rigdum—bonny blue—decoy me!
Decoy me, Mary—decoy me, Jenny—decoy me, Sarah—decoy me!
Hum-strum, kettle-drum—rum-dum—beauty decoy me! [*Exeunt.*

*Scene opens and discovers a regimental Court-Martial.*—JUDGE, ADVOCATE, CLERK, MAJOR APTJONES, LOTHIAN, BLOOMER, *and other Officers.*

*Loth.* Come, Mr. Judge, let us proceed to business.

*Clerk.* Gentlemen of the court, by virtue of a warrant signed by his Excel-

lency the Governor, you are to inform yourselves of all complaints and misdemeanors that may be brought before you, and upon evidence and confession of the criminal party, you are to proceed in judgment, according to the established Articles of War and the custom of the Army. Being sworn, gentlemen, you may open the court.

*Maj.* Well, let hur call in the parties.

*Judge.* Call in the prisoner, and the witnesses against him.

[*Enter* LOVELACE, VIOLETA, JESSE, HALBERT, *and* DRUMMER.

*Judge* (*to* VIOLETA). Stand where you are, sir. What have you to advance against the prisoner?

*Viol.* I was exercising my party early in the morning, and this recruit being more awkward than the rest, I corrected him for it, when he called me rascal, and endeavoured to stab me with his bayonet, which he certainly had effected, but the sergeant prevented——

*Hal.* It is certainly true as my officer reports.

*Loth.* Such a bluidy dog should have been cut to mince-collops on the spot!

*Maj.* Hur is a clouded knave, nor has the fear of Cot before hur eyes. Hur shall be advanced to a gibbet.

*Bloom.* Yes, he should hang in the wind to cool his fiery spirit.

*Drum.* (*to* LOVELACE). Ah! comrade, I thought that you would be no more in their hands than a drumstick in mine.

*Lov.* Gentlemen, I know your power, and submit to my sentence. Life has long been a burden to me. I had rather have paid the debt in the field, but I die contented. A blow is what I never received before, and what my pride will never suffer me to bear.

*Bloom.* 'Tis an insolent dog, to resent a stroke from an officer. I always think I do a fellow an honour when I cane him.

*Lov.* But, permit me to inform this honourable court, before I die, that I am a gentleman of fortune of the county of York, but, being cruelly treated by the woman I adored, I sought death in battle to relieve my woes, and as a soldier left my country. Now lead me to my fate. Ah, ungrateful Violeta. (*Turning as to go off.*)

*Viol.* Oh, save me, Heaven! (*Fainting in* HALBERT'S *arms.* JESSE *runs to her.*)

*Jesse.* Oh, help! help! Oh, save my mistress!

*Lov.* Mistress!

*Bloom.* What! does our fighting spark faint at the name of death?

*Viol.* (*recovering*). Hold—hold—hold! Ah, injured Lovelace! wretched Violeta!

*Lov.* Ah, ye protecting powers! I know that tuneful voice. She lives! she lives! the dear deluding Violeta.

*Bloom.* 'Tis a woman, egad! I must make a pretty figure here to have set my wits to a woman.

*Loth.* Zounds! if women begin to turn soldiers, and only ladylike officers get promotion, 'tis time I was hame in quarters for life. The best act, Maister Bloomer, ye can do is to skep awa' for the Governor, and let him——

[A break occurs here in the manuscript—the last leaf of which gives the following as the rough draft of a conclusion]:—

FINALE.

MRS. LAPELLE.

It should be the study of mistress and wife
To smooth by her smiles the rough journey of life,

For happiness truly the fair must attend
Who makes virtue her guide, and her husband her friend.

LOVELACE.

All heroes of arms, since the day of old Troy,
Have been scratched more or less with the dart of the Boy
It is Beauty the standard that bears to the field,
And to Beauty alone 'tis that Englishmen yield.

CAROLINE.

The fop may reform, and the rake may repent;
For vice, when corrected, brings pleasing content;
And every fair maiden's so vain of her charms,
That she thinks reformation's restricted to arms.

VIOLETA.

The spirit I've shown I hope will inspire
Our ladylike soldiers with courage and fire
He cannot wear scarlet, or fight with the French,
Who won't surpass me for the love of his wench.

HALBERT *and* CHORUS.

'Tis Valour's the star which irradiates earth,
Not titles and strings—the mere fungus of birth;
By courage our fathers defended this isle,
And her sons ne'er retreat, while her daughters but smile!

CHORUS.

'Tis Valour's the star which irradiates earth, &c.

# Tales.

## Rosamund Gray.

[Originally published in 1798, by Lee and Hurst, at 32, Paternoster Row, in a half-crown duodecimo of 134 pages, under the title of "A Tale of Rosamund Gray, and Old Blind Margaret." The root-idea of this charming narrative is traceable to the antique ballad of "The Old Woman clothed in Gray." The little volume in its original issue was inscribed in friendship to Marmaduke Thompson, of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge.]

### CHAPTER I.

It was noontide. The sun was very hot. An old gentlewoman sat spinning in a little arbour at the door of her cottage. She was blind; and her grand-daughter was reading the Bible to her. The old lady had just left her work, to attend to the story of Ruth.

"Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her." It was a passage she could not let pass without a *comment*. The moral she drew from it was not very *new*, to be sure. The girl had heard it a hundred times before—and a hundred times more she could have heard it, without suspecting it to be tedious. Rosamund loved her grandmother.

The old lady loved Rosamund too; and she had reason for so doing. Rosamund was to her at once a child and a servant. She had only *her* left in the world. They two lived together.

They had once known better days. The story of Rosamund's parents, their failure, their folly, and distresses, may be told another time. Our tale hath grief enough in it.

It was now about a year and a half since old Margaret Gray had sold off all her effects, to pay the debts of Rosamund's father—just after the mother had died of a broken heart; for her husband had fled his country to hide his shame in a foreign land. At that period the old lady retired to a small cottage, in the village of Widford, in Hertfordshire.

Rosamund, in her thirteenth year, was left destitute, without fortune or friends; she went with her grandmother. In all this time she had served her faithfully and lovingly.

Old Margaret Gray, when she first came into these parts, had eyes, and could see. The neighbours said, they had been dimmed by weeping: be that as it may, she was latterly grown quite blind. "God is very good to us, child; I can *feel* you yet." This she would sometimes say; and we need not wonder to hear, that Rosamund clave unto her grandmother.

Margaret retained a spirit unbroken by calamity. There was a principle *within*, which it seemed as if no outward circumstances could reach. It was a *religious* principle, and she had taught it to Rosamund; for the girl had mostly resided with her grandmother from her earliest years. Indeed she had taught her all that she knew herself; and the old lady's knowledge did not extend a vast way.

Margaret had drawn her maxims from observation; and a pretty long experience in life had contributed to make her, at times, a little *positive;* but Rosamund never argued with her grandmother.

Their library consisted chiefly in a large family Bible, with notes and expositions by various learned expositors from Bishop Jewell downwards.

This might never be suffered to lie about like other books—but was kept constantly wrapped up in a handsome case of green velvet, with gold tassels—the only relic of departed grandeur they had brought with them to the cottage—everything else of value had been sold off for the purpose abovementioned.

This Bible Rosamund, when a child, had never dared to open without permission; and even yet, from habit, continued the custom. Margaret had parted with none of her *authority;* indeed it was never exerted with much harshness; and happy was Rosamund, though a girl grown, when she could obtain leave to read her Bible. It was a treasure too valuable for an indiscriminate use; and Margaret still pointed out to her granddaughter *where to read.*

Besides this, they had the "Complete Angler, or Contemplative Man's Recreation," with cuts—"Pilgrim's Progress," the first part—a "Cookery Book," with a few dry sprigs of rosemary and lavender stuck here and there between the leaves (I suppose, to point to some of the old lady's most favourite receipts) and there was "Wither's Emblems," an old book, and quaint. The old-fashioned pictures in this last book were among the first exciters of the infant Rosamund's curiosity. Her contemplation had fed upon them in rather older years.

Rosamund had not read many books besides these; or if any, they had been only occasional companions: these were to Rosamund as old friends, that she had long known. I know not, whether the peculiar cast of her mind might not be traced. in part, to a tincture she had received, in early life, from Walton, and Wither, from John Bunyan, and her Bible.

Rosamund's mind was pensive and reflective, rather than what passes usually for *clever* or *acute.* From a child she was remarkably shy and thoughtful—this was taken for stupidity and want of feeling; and the child has been sometimes whipped for being a *stubborn thing,* when her little heart was almost bursting with affection.

Even now her grandmother would often reprove her, when she found her too grave or melancholy; give her sprightly lectures about good humour and rational mirth; and not unfrequently fall a crying herself, to the great discredit of her lecture. Those tears endeared her the more to Rosamund.

Margaret would say, "Child, I love you to cry, when I think you are only remembering your poor dear father and mother—I would have you think about them sometimes—it would be strange if you did not—but I fear, Rosamund, I fear, girl, you sometimes think too deeply about your own situation and poor prospects in life. When you do so, you do wrong—remember the naughty rich man in the parable. He never had any good thoughts about God, and his religion: and that might have been your case."

Rosamund, at these times, could not reply to her: she was not in the habit of *arguing* with her grandmother; so she was quite silent on these occasions—or else the girl knew well enough herself, that she had only been sad to think of the desolate condition of her best friend, to see her, in her old age, so infirm and blind. But she had never been used to make excuses, when the old lady said she was doing wrong.

The neighbours were all very kind to them. The veriest rustics never passed them without a bow, or a pulling off of the hat—some show of courtesy, awkward indeed, but affectionate—with a "good morrow, madam," or "young madam," as it might happen.

Rude and savage natures, who seem born with a propensity to express contempt for anything that looks like prosperity, yet felt respect for its declining lustre.

The farmers, and better sort of people (as they are called) all promised to provide for Rosamund, when her grandmother should die. Margaret trusted in God, and believed them.

She used to say, "I have lived many years in the world, and have never known people, *good people*, to be left without some friend; a relation, a benefactor, a *something*. God knows our wants—that it is not good for man or woman to be alone; and he always sends us an helpmate, a leaning-place, a *somewhat*." Upon this sure ground of experience, did Margaret build her trust in Providence.

## CHAPTER II.

ROSAMUND had just made an end of her story (as I was about to relate) and was listening to the application of the moral (which said application she was old enough to have made herself, but her grandmother still continued to treat her in many respects as a child, and Rosamund was in no haste to lay claim to the title of womanhood) when a young gentleman made his appearance, and interrupted them.

It was young Allan Clare, who had brought a present of peaches, and some roses, for Rosamund.

He laid his little basket down on a seat of the arbour; and in a respectful tone of voice, as though he were addressing a parent, inquired of Margaret, "how she did."

The old lady seemed pleased with his attentions—answered his inquiries by saying, that "her cough was less troublesome a nights, but she had not yet got rid of it, and probably she never might; but she did not like to tease young people with an account of her infirmities."

A few kind words passed on either side, when young Clare, glancing a tender look at the girl, who had all this time been silent, took leave of them with saying, "I shall bring *Elinor* to see you in the evening."

When he was gone, the old lady began to prattle.

"That is a sweet dispositioned youth, and I *do* love him dearly, I must say it—there is such a modesty in all he says or does—he should not come here so often, to be sure, but I don't know how to help it; there is so much goodness in him, I can't find in my heart to forbid him. But, Rosamund, girl, I must tell you beforehand; when you grow older Mr. Clare must be no companion for *you*—while you were both so young, it was all very well—but the time is coming, when folks will think harm of it, if a rich young gentleman, like Mr. Clare, comes so often to our poor cottage. Dost hear, girl? why don't you answer? come, I did not mean to say anything to hurt you—speak to me, Rosamund—nay, I must not have you be sullen—I don't love people that are sullen."

And in this manner was this poor soul running on, unheard and unheeded, when it occurred to her, that possibly the girl might not be *within hearing*.

And true it was, that Rosamund had slunk away at the first mention of Mr. Clare's good qualities: and when she returned, which was not till a few minutes after Margaret had made an end of her fine harangue, it is certain her cheeks *did* look very *rosy*. That might have been from the heat of the day or from exercise, for she had been walking in the garden.

Margaret, we know, was blind; and, in this case, it was lucky for Rosamund that she was so, or she might have made some not unlikely surmises.

I must not have my reader infer from this, that I at all think it likely, a young maid of fourteen would fall in love without asking her grandmother's leave—the thing itself is not to be conceived.

To obviate all suspicions, I am disposed to communicate a little anecdote of Rosamund.

A month or two back her grandmother had been giving her the strictest prohibitions, in her walks, not to go near a certain spot, which was dangerous from the circumstance of a huge overgrown oak-tree spreading its prodigious arms across a deep chalk-pit, which they partly concealed.

To this fatal place Rosamund came one day—female curiosity, we know, is older than the flood—let us not think hardly of the girl, if she partook of the sexual failing.

Rosamund ventured farther and farther—climbed along one of the branches—approached the forbidden chasm—her foot slipped—she was not killed—but it was a mercy she escaped—other branches intercepted her fall—and with a palpitating heart she made her way back to the cottage.

It happened that evening, that her grandmother was in one of her best humours, caressed Rosamund, talked of old times, and what a blessing it was they two found a shelter in their little cottage, and in conclusion told Rosamund "she was a good girl, and God would one day reward her for her kindness to her old blind grandmother."

This was more than Rosamund conld bear. Her morning's disobedience came fresh in her mind, she felt she did not deserve all this from Margaret, and at last burst into a fit of crying, and made confession of her fault. The old gentlewoman kissed and forgave her.

Rosamund never went near that naughty chasm again.

Margaret would never have heard of this, if Rosamund had not told of it herself. But this young maid had a delicate moral sense, which would not suffer her take advantage of her grandmother, to deceive her, or conceal anything from her, though Margaret was old, and blind, and easy to be imposed upon.

Another virtuous *trait* I recollect of Rosamund, and, now I am in the vein, I will tell it.

Some, I know, will think these things trifles—and they are so—but if these *minutiæ* make my reader better acquainted with Rosamund, I am content to abide the imputation.

These promises of character, hints, and early indications of a *sweet nature*, are to me more dear, and choice in the selection, than any of those pretty wild flowers, which this young maid, this virtuous Rosamund, has ever gathered in a fine May morning, to make a posy to place in the bosom of her old blind friend.

Rosamund had a very just notion of drawing, and would often employ her talent in making sketches of the surrounding scenery.

On a landscape, a larger piece than she had ever yet attempted, she had now been working for three or four months. She had taken great pains with it, given much time to it, and it was nearly finished. For *whose* particular inspection it was designed, I will not venture to conjecture. We know it could not have been for her grandmother's.

One day she went out on a short errand, and left her landscape on the table. When she returned, she found it *gone*.

Rosamund from the first suspected some mischief, but held her tongue. At length she made the fatal discovery. Margaret, in her absence, had laid violent hands on it; not knowing what it was, but taking it for some waste paper, had torn it in half, and with one half of this elaborate composition had twisted herself up—a thread-paper!

Rosamund spread out her hands at sight of the disaster, gave her grand-

mother a roguish smile, but said not a word. She knew the poor soul would only fret, if she told her of it,—and when once Margaret was set a-fretting for other people's misfortunes, the fit held her pretty long.

So Rosamund that very afternoon began another piece of the same size and subject; and Margaret, to her dying day, never dreamed of the mischief she had unconsciously done.

## CHAPTER III.

ROSAMUND GRAY was the most beautiful young creature that eyes ever beheld. Her face had the sweetest expression in it—a gentleness—a modesty—a timidity—a certain charm—a grace without a name.

There was a sort of melancholy mingled in her smile. It was not the thoughtless levity of a girl—it was not the restrained simper of premature womanhood—it was something which the poet Young might have remembered, when he composed that perfect line,

> "Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair."

She was a mild-eyed maid, and everybody loved her. Young Allan Clare, when but a boy, sighed for her.

Her yellow hair fell in bright and curling clusters, like

> "those hanging locks
> Of young Apollo."

Her voice was trembling and musical. A graceful diffidence pleaded for her whenever she spake—and, if she said but little, that little found its way to the heart.

Young, and artless, and innocent, meaning no harm, and thinking none; affectionate, as a smiling infant—playful, yet unobtrusive, as a weaned lamb—everybody loved her. Young Allan Clare, when but a boy, sighed for her.

The moon is shining in so brightly at my window, where I write, that I feel it is a crime not to suspend my employment awhile to gaze at her.

See how she glideth, in maiden honour, through the clouds, who divide on either side to do her homage.

Beautiful vision!—as I contemplate thee, an internal harmony is communicated to my mind, a moral brightness, a tacit analogy of mental purity: a calm like *that* we ascribe in fancy to the favoured inhabitants of thy fairy regions, "argent fields."

I marvel not, O moon, that heathen people, in the "olden times," did worship thy deity—Cynthia, Diana, Hecate. Christian Europe invokes thee not by these names now—her idolatry is of a blacker stain; Belial is her God—she worships Mammon.

False things are told concerning thee, fair Planet—For I will ne'er believe, that thou canst take a perverse pleasure in distorting the brains of us poor mortals. Lunatics! moon-struck! Calumny invented, and Folly took up, these names. I would hope better things from thy mild aspect and benign influences.

Lady of Heaven, thou lendest thy pure lamp to light the way to the Virgin Mourner, when she goes to seek the tomb where her Warrior Lover lies.

Friend of the distressed, thou speakest only *peace* to the lonely sufferer, who walks forth in the placid evening, beneath thy gentle light, to chide at fortune; or to complain of changed friends, or unhappy loves.

Do I dream, or doth not even now a heavenly calm descend from thee into my bosom, as I meditate on the chaste loves of Rosamund and her Clare?

## CHAPTER IV.

ALLAN CLARE was just two years older than Rosamund. He was a boy of fourteen, when he first became acquainted with her—it was soon after she had come to reside with her grandmother at Widford.

He met her by chance one day, carrying a pitcher in her hand, which she had been filling from a neighbouring well—the pitcher was heavy, and she seemed to be bending with its weight.

Allan insisted on carrying it for her—for he thought it a sin, that a delicate young maid, like her, should be so employed, and he stand idle by.

Allan had a propensity to do little kind offices for everybody—but at sight of Rosamund Gray his first fire was kindled—his young mind seemed to have found an object, and his enthusiasm was from that time forth awakened. His visits, from that day, were pretty frequent at the cottage.

He was never happier than when he could get Rosamund to walk out with him. He would make her admire the scenes he admired—fancy the wild flowers he fancied—watch the clouds he was watching—and not unfrequently repeat to her poetry, which he loved, and make her love it.

On their return, the old lady, who considered them yet as but children, would bid Rosamund fetch Mr. Clare a glass of her currant wine, a bowl of new milk, or some cheap dainty, which was more welcome to Allan than the costliest delicacies of a prince's court.

The boy and girl, for they were no more at that age, grew fond of each other—more fond than either of them suspected.

> "They would sit and sigh,
> And look upon each other, and conceive
> Not what they ail'd; yet something they did ail,
> And yet were well—and yet they were not well;
> And what was their disease, they could not tell."

And thus,

> "In this first garden of their simpleness
> They spent their childhood."

A circumstance had lately happened, which in some sort altered the nature of their attachment.

Rosamund was one day reading the tale of "Julia de Roubigné,"—a book which young Clare had lent her—

Allan was standing by, looking over her, with one hand thrown round her neck, and a finger of the other pointing to a passage in Julia's third letter.

"Maria! in my hours of visionary indulgence, I have sometimes painted to myself a *husband*—no matter whom—comforting me amidst the distresses, which fortune had laid upon us. I have smiled upon him through my tears; tears, not of anguish, but of tenderness;—our children were playing around us, unconscious of misfortune; we had taught them to be humble, and to be happy; our little shed was reserved to us, and their smiles to cheer it. I have imagined the luxury of such a scene, and affliction became a part of my dream of happiness."

The girl blushed as she read, and trembled—she had a sort of confused sensation, that Allan was noticing her—yet she durst not lift her eyes from the book, but continued reading, scarce knowing what she read.

Allan guessed the cause of her confusion. Allan trembled too—his colour came and went—his feelings became impetuous—and, flinging both arms round her neck, he kissed his young favourite.

Rosamund was vexed, and pleased, soothed and frightened, all in a moment —a fit of tears came to her relief.

Allan had indulged before in these little freedoms, and Rosamund had thought no harm of them—but from this time the girl grew timid and reserved —distant in her manner, and careful of her behaviour, in Allan's presence—not seeking his society, as before, but rather shunning it—delighting more to feed upon his idea in absence.

Allan too, from this day, seemed changed: his manner became, though not less tender, yet more respectful and diffident—his bosom felt a throb, it had till now not known, in the society of Rosamund—and, if he was less familiar with her than in former times, that charm of delicacy had superadded a grace to Rosamund, which, while he feared, he loved.

There is a *mysterious character*, heightened indeed by fancy and passion, but not without foundation in reality and observation, which true lovers have ever imputed to the object of their affections. This character Rosamund had now acquired with Allan—something *angelic*, *perfect*, *exceeding nature*.

Young Clare dwelt very near to the cottage. He had lost his parents, who were rather wealthy, early in life; and was left to the care of a sister, some ten years older than himself.

Elinor Clare was an excellent young lady—discreet, intelligent, and affectionate. Allan revered her as a parent, while he loved her as his own familiar friend. He told all the little secrets of his heart to her—but there was *one*, which he had hitherto unaccountably concealed from her—namely, the extent of his regard for Rosamund.

Elinor knew of his visits to the cottage, and was no stranger to the persons of Margaret and her granddaughter. She had several times met them, when she has been walking with her brother—a civility usually passed on either side—but Elinor avoided troubling her brother with any unseasonable questions.

Allan's heart often beat, and he had been going to tell his sister *all*—but something like shame (false or true, I shall not stay to inquire) had hitherto kept him back—still the secret, unrevealed, hung upon his conscience like a crime—for his temper had a sweet and noble frankness in it, which bespake him yet a virgin from the world.

There was a fine openness in his countenance—the character of it somewhat resembled Rosamund's—except that more fire and enthusiasm were discernible in Allan's—his eyes were of a darker blue than Rosamund's—his hair was of a chestnut colour—his cheeks ruddy, and tinged with brown. There was a cordial sweetness in Allan's smile, the like to which I never saw in any other face.

Elinor had hitherto connived at her brother's attachment to Rosamund. Elinor, I believe, was something of a physiognomist, and thought she could trace in the countenance and manner of Rosamund qualities, which no brother of hers need be ashamed to love.

The time was now come, when Elinor was desirous of knowing her brother's favourite more intimately—an opportunity offered of breaking the matter to Allan.

The morning of the day, in which he carried his present of fruit and flowers to Rosamund, his sister had observed him more than usually busy in the garden, culling fruit with a nicety of choice not common to him.

She came up to him, unobserved, and, taking him by the arm, inquired, with a questioning smile—"What are you doing, Allan? and who are those peaches designed for?"

"For Rosamund Gray," he replied; and his heart seemed relieved of a burthen, which had long oppressed it.

"I have a mind to become acquainted with your handsome friend—will you introduce me, Allan? I think I should like to go and see her this afternoon."

"Do go, do go, Elinor—you don't know what a good creature she is—and old blind Margaret, you will like *her* very much."

His sister promised to accompany him after dinner; and they parted. Allan gathered no more peaches, but hastily cropping a few roses to fling into his basket, went away with it half filled, being impatient to announce to Rosamund the coming of her promised visitor.

## CHAPTER V.

WHEN Allan returned home, he found an invitation had been left for him, in his absence, to spend that evening with a young friend, who had just quitted a public school in London, and was come to pass one night in his father's house at Widford, previous to his departure the next morning for Edinburgh University.

It was Allan's bosom friend—they had not met for some months—and it was probable, a much longer time must intervene, before they should meet again.

Yet Allan could not help looking a little blank, when he first heard of the invitation. This was to have been an important evening. But Elinor soon relieved her brother, by expressing her readiness to go alone to the cottage.

"I will not lose the pleasure I promised myself, whatever you may determine upon, Allan—I will go by myself, rather than be disappointed."

"Will you, will you, Elinor?"

Elinor promised to go—and I believe, Allan, on a second thought, was not very sorry to be spared the awkwardness of introducing two persons to each other, both so dear to him, but either of whom might happen not much to fancy the other.

At times, indeed, he was confident, that Elinor *must* love Rosamund, and Rosamond *must* love Elinor—but there were also times, in which he felt misgivings—it was an event he could scarce hope for very joy!

Allan's *real presence* that evening was more at the cottage than at the house, where his *bodily semblance* was visiting—his friend could not help complaining of a certain absence of mind, a *coldness* he called it.

It might have been expected, and in the course of things predicted, that Allan would have asked his friend some questions, of what had happened since their last meeting, what his feelings were on leaving school, the probable time when they should meet again, and a hundred natural questions, which friendship is most lavish of at such times; but nothing of all this ever occurred to Allan—they did not even settle the method of their future correspondence.

The consequence was, as might have been expected, Allan's friend thought him much altered, and, after his departure, sat down to compose a doleful sonnet about a "faithless friend." I do not find that he ever finished it—indignation, or a dearth of rhymes, causing him to break off in the middle.

## CHAPTER VI.

IN my catalogue of the little library at the cottage, I forgot to mention a book of Common Prayer. My reader's fancy might easily have supplied the

omission—old ladies of Margaret's stamp (God bless them) may as well be without their spectacles, or their elbow chair, as their prayer-book—I love them for it.

Margaret's was a handsome octavo, printed by Baskerville, the binding red, and fortified with silver at the edges. Out of this book it was their custom every afternoon to read the proper psalms appointed for the day.

The way they managed was this: they took verse by verse—Rosamund *read* her little portion, and Margaret repeated hers, in turn, from memory—for Margaret could say all the psalter by heart, and a good part of the Bible besides. She would not unfrequently put the girl right, when she stumbled or skipped. This Margaret imputed to giddiness—a quality, which Rosamund was by no means remarkable for—but old ladies, like Margaret, are not, in all instances, alike discriminative.

They had been employed in this manner just before Miss Clare arrived at the cottage. The psalm they had been reading, was the hundred and fourth—Margaret was naturally led by it into a discussion of the works of creation.

There had been *thunder* in the course of the day—an occasion of instruction which the old lady never let pass—she began—

"Thunder has a very awful sound—some say, God Almighty is angry whenever it thunders—that it is the voice of God speaking to us—for my part, I am not afraid of it——."

And in this manner the old lady was going on to particularize, as usual, its beneficial effects, in clearing the air, destroying of vermin, &c., when the entrance of Miss Clare put an end to her discourse.

Rosamund received her with respectful tenderness—and, taking her grandmother by the hand, said with great sweetness, "Miss Clare is come to see you, grandmother."

"I beg pardon, lady—I cannot *see* you—but you are heartily welcome—is your brother with you, Miss Clare? I don't hear him."

"He could not come, madam, but he sends his love by me."

"You have an excellent brother, Miss Clare—but pray do us the honour to take some refreshment—Rosamund——"

And the old lady was going to give directions for a bottle of her currant wine—when Elinor, smiling, said "she was come to drink a dish of tea with her, and expected to find no ceremony."

"After tea, I promise myself a walk with *you*, Rosamund, if your grandmother can spare you——" Rosamund looked at her grandmother.

"O for that matter, I should be sorry to debar the girl from any pleasure—I am sure it's lonesome enough for her to be with *me* always—and, if Miss Clare will take you out, child, I shall do very well by myself till you return—it will not be the first time, you know, that I have been left here alone—some of the neighbours will be dropping in by-and-by—or if *not*, I shall take no harm."

Rosamund had all the simple manners of a child—she kissed her grandmother, and looked happy.

All tea-time the old lady's discourse was little more than a panegyric on young Clare's good qualities. Elinor looked at her young friend, and smiled. Rosamund was beginning to look grave—but there was a cordial sunshine in the face of Elinor, before which any clouds of reserve that had been gathering on Rosamund's, soon brake away.

"Does your grandmother ever go out, Rosamund?"

Margaret prevented the girl's reply by saying,—"My dear young lady, I am an old woman, and very infirm—Rosamund takes me a few paces beyond the door sometimes—but I walk very badly—I love best to sit in our little arbour, when the sun shines—I yet can feel it warm and cheerful—and, if I lose the beauties of the season, I can still remember them with pleasure, and rejoice that

younger eyes than mine can see and enjoy them—I shall be very happy if you and Rosamund can take delight in this fine summer evening."

"I shall want to rob you of Rosamund's company now and then, if we like one another. I had hoped to have seen *you*, madam, at our house. I don't know, whether we could not make room for you to come and live with us—what say you to it?—Allan would be proud to tend you, I am sure; and Rosamund and I should be nice company."

Margaret was all unused to such kindnesses, and wept—Margaret had a great spirit—yet she was not above accepting an obligation from a worthy person—there was a delicacy in Miss Clare's manner—she could have no interest, but pure goodness, to induce her to make the offer—at length the old lady spake from a full heart.

"Miss Clare, this little cottage received us in our distress—it gave us shelter when we had *no home*—we have praised God in it—and, while life remains, I think I shall never part from it—Rosamund does everything for me——

"And will do, grandmother, as long as I live"—and then Rosamund fell a-crying.

"You are a good girl, Rosamund, and, if you do but find friends when I am dead and gone, I shall want no better accommodation while I live—but God bless you, lady, a thousand times for your kind offer."

Elinor was moved to tears, and, affecting a sprightliness, bade Rosamund prepare for her walk. The girl put on her white silk bonnet; and Elinor thought she never beheld so lovely a creature.

They took leave of Margaret, and walked out together—they rambled over all Rosamund's favourite haunts—through many a sunny field—by secret glade or woodwalk, where the girl had wandered so often with her beloved Clare.

Who now so happy as Rosamund? She had ofttimes heard Allan speak with great tenderness of his sister—she was now rambling, arm in arm, with that very sister, the "vaunted sister" of her friend, her beloved Clare.

Not a tree, not a bush, scarce a wild flower in their path, but revived in Rosamund some tender recollection, a conversation perhaps, or some chaste endearment. Life, and a new scene of things, were now opening before her—she was got into a fairy-land of uncertain existence.

Rosamund was too happy to talk much—but Elinor was delighted with her, when she *did* talk:—the girl's remarks were suggested, most of them, by the passing scene—and they betrayed, all of them, the liveliness of present impulse:—her conversation did not consist in a comparison of vapid feeling, and interchange of sentiment lip-deep—it had all the freshness of young sensation in it.

Sometimes they talked of Allan.

"Allan is very good" said Rosamund, "very good *indeed* to my grandmother—he will sit with her, and hear her stories, and read to her, and try to divert her a hundred ways. I wonder sometimes he is not tired. She talks him to death!"

"Then you confess, Rosamund, that the old lady *does* tire *you* sometimes."

"O no, I did not mean *that*—it's very different—I am used to all her ways, and I can humour her, and please her, and I ought to do it, for she is the only friend I ever had in the world."

The new friends did not conclude their walk till it was late, and Rosamund began to be apprehensive about the old lady, who had been all this time alone.

On their return to the cottage, they found that Margaret had been somewhat impatient—old ladies, *good old ladies*, will be so at times—age is timorous, and suspicious of danger, where no danger is.

Besides, it was Margaret's bedtime, for she kept very good hours—indeed,

in the distribution of her meals, and sundry other particulars, she resembled the livers in the antique world, more than might well beseem a creature of this —none but Rosamund could get her mess of broth ready, or put her nightcaps on—(she wore seven; the undermost was of flannel)—

"You know, love, I can do nothing to help myself—here I must stay till you return."

So the new friends parted for that night, Elinor having made Margaret promise to give Rosamund leave to come and see her the next day.

## CHAPTER VII.

MISS CLARE, we may be sure, made her brother very happy, when she told him of the engagement she had made for the morrow, and how delighted she had been with his handsome friend.

Allan, I believe, got little sleep that night. I know not, whether joy be not a more troublesome bed-fellow than grief—hope keeps a body very wakeful, I know.

Elinor Clare was the best good creature—the least selfish human being I ever knew—always at work for other people's good, planning other people's happiness—continually forgetful to consult for her own personal gratifications, except, indirectly, in the welfare of another, while her parents lived, the most attentive of daughters—since they died, the kindest of sisters—I never knew but *one* like her.

It happens that I have some of this young lady's *letters* in my possession, I shall present my reader with one of them—it was written a short time after the death of her mother, and addressed to a cousin, a dear friend of Elinor's, who was then on the point of being married to Mr. Beaumont of Staffordshire, and had invited Elinor to assist at her nuptials. I will transcribe it with minute fidelity.

*Elinor Clare to Maria Leslie.*

WIDFORD, *July the* —, 17—.

Health, innocence, and beauty, shall be thy bridemaids, my sweet cousin. I have no heart to undertake the office. Alas! what have I to do in the house of feasting?

Maria! I fear, lest my griefs should prove obtrusive. Yet bear with me a little—I have recovered already a share of my former spirits.

I fear more for Allan than myself. The loss of two such parents, with so short an interval, bears very heavy on him. The boy *hangs* about me from morning till night. He is perpetually forcing a smile into his poor pale cheeks —you know the sweetness of his smile, Maria.

To-day, after dinner, when he took his glass of wine in his hand, he burst into tears, and would not, or could not then, tell me the reason—afterwards he told me—"he had been used to drink mamma's health after dinner, and *that* came in his head, and made him cry." I feel the claims the boy has upon me —I perceive that I am living to *some end*—and the thought supports me.

Already I have attained to a state of complacent feelings—my mother's lessons were not thrown away upon her Elinor.

In the visions of last night her spirit seemed to stand at my bedside—a light, as of noonday, shone upon the room—she opened my curtains—she smiled upon me with the same placid smile as in her lifetime. I felt no fear. "Elinor," she said, "for my sake take care of young Allan,"—and I awoke with calm feelings.

Maria! shall not the meeting of blessed spirits, think you, be something like this? I think, I could even now behold my mother without dread—I would

ask pardon of her for all my past omissions of duty, for all the little asperities in my temper, which have so often grieved her gentle spirit when living. Maria! I think she would not turn away from me.

Oftentimes a feeling, more vivid than memory, brings her before me—I see her sit in her old elbow chair, her arms folded upon her lap, a tear upon her cheek, that seems to upbraid her unkind daughter for some inattention—I wipe it away—and kiss her honoured lips.

Maria! when I have been fancying all this, Allan will come in, with his poor eyes red with weeping, and taking me by the hand, destroy the vision in a moment.

I am prating to you, my sweet cousin, but it is the prattle of the heart, which Maria loves. Besides, whom have I to talk to of these things, but you—you have been my counsellor in times past, my companion, and sweet familiar friend. Bear with me a little—I mourn the "cherishers of my infancy."

I sometimes count it a blessing, that my father did not prove the *survivor*. You know something of his story. You know, there was a foul tale current, it was the busy malice of that bad man, S——, which helped to spread it abroad—you will recollect the active good nature of our friend W—— and T——; what pains they took to undeceive people—with the better sort their kind labours prevailed; but there was still a party, who shut their ears. You know the issue of it. My father's great spirit bore up against it for some time—my father never was a *bad* man—but that spirit was broken at the last—and the greatly-injured man was forced to leave his old paternal dwelling in Staffordshire—for the neighbours had begun to point at him. Maria! I have *seen* them *point* at him, and have been ready to drop.

In this part of the country, where the slander had not reached he sought a retreat—and he found a still more grateful asylum in the daily solicitudes of the best of wives.

"An enemy hath done this," I have heard him say—and at such times my mother would speak to him so soothingly of forgiveness, and long-suffering, and the bearing of injuries with patience; would heal all his wounds with so gentle a touch;—I have seen the old man weep like a child.

The gloom that beset his mind, at times betrayed him into scepticism—he has doubted if there be a Providence! I have heard him say, "God has built a brave world, but methinks he has left his creatures to bustle in it *how they may*."

At such times he could not endure to hear my mother talk in a religious strain. He would say, "Woman, have done—you confound, you perplex me, when you talk of these matters, and for one day at least unfit me for the business of life."

I have seen her look at him—O God, Maria! such a *look!* it plainly spake, that she was willing to have shared her precious hope with the partner of her earthly cares—but she found a repulse.

Deprived of such a wife, think you the old man could have long endured his existence? or what consolation would his wretched daughter have had to offer him, but silent and imbecile tears?

My sweet cousin, you will think me tedious—and I am so—but it does me good to talk these matters over. And do not you be alarmed for me—my sorrows are subsiding into a deep and sweet resignation. I shall soon be sufficiently composed, I know it, to participate in my friend's happiness.

Let me call her, while yet I may, my own Maria Leslie! Methinks, I shall not like you by any other name. Beaumont! Maria Beaumont! it hath a strange sound with it, I shall never be reconciled to this name—but do not you fear—Maria Leslie shall plead with me for Maria Beaumont.

And now, my sweet friend, God love you, and your

Elinor Clare.

I find in my collection, several letters, written soon after the date of the preceding, and addressed all of them to Maria Beaumont. I am tempted to make some short extracts from these—my tale will suffer interruption by them—but I was willing to preserve whatever memorials I could of Elinor Clare.

*From Elinor Clare to Maria Beaumont.*

AN EXTRACT.

——I have been strolling out for half an hour in the fields; and my mind has been occupied by thoughts, which Maria has a right to participate. I have been bringing my *mother* to my recollection. My heart ached with the remembrance of infirmities, that made her closing years of life so sore a trial to her.

I was concerned to think that our family differences have been one source of disquiet to her. I am sensible, that *this last* we are apt to exaggerate after a person's death; and surely, in the main, there was considerable harmony among the members of our little family, still I was concerned to think, that we ever gave her gentle spirit disquiet.

I thought on years back—on all my parents' friends—the H——s, the F——s, on D——, S——, and on many a merry evening in the fire-side circle, in that comfortable back parlour—it is never used now.

O ye *Matravises** of the age, ye know not what ye lose, in despising these petty topics of endeared remembrance, associated circumstances of past times; ye know not the throbbings of the heart, tender yet affectionately familiar, which accompany the dear and honoured names of *father* or of *mother*.

Maria! I thought on all these things; my heart ached at the review of them—it yet aches, while I write this—but I am never so satisfied with my train of thoughts, as when they run upon these subjects; the tears they draw from us, meliorate and soften the heart, and keep fresh within us that memory of dear friends dead, which alone can fit us for a readmission to their society hereafter.

*From another Letter.*

——I had a bad dream this morning, that Allan was dead; and who, of all persons in the world, do you think, put on mourning for him? Why, *Matravis*. This alone might cure me of superstitious thoughts, if I were inclined to them; for why should Matravis *mourn* for us, or our family? *Still* it was pleasant to awake, and find it but a dream. Methinks something like an awakening from an ill dream shall the Resurrection from the dead be. Materially different from our accustomed scenes, and ways of life, the *World to come* may possibly not be; still it is represented to us under the notion of a *Rest*, a *Sabbath*, a state of bliss not to be conceived.

*From another Letter.*

——Methinks, you and I should have been born under the same roof, sucked the same milk, conned the same hornbook, thumbed the same Testament, together:—for we have been more than sisters, Maria!

Something will still be whispering to me, that I shall one day be inmate of the same dwelling with my cousin, partaker with her in all the delights, which spring from mutual good offices, kind words, attentions in sickness and in health,—conversation, sometimes innocently trivial, and at others profitably serious;—books read and commented on, together; meals eat, and walks taken, together,—and conferences, how we may best do good to this poor per-

* This name will be explained presently.

son or that, and wean our spirits from the world's *cares*, without divesting ourselves of its *charities*. What a picture I have drawn, Maria!—and none of all these things may ever come to pass.

*From another Letter.*

——Continue to write to me, my sweet cousin. Many good thoughts, resolutions, and proper views of things, pass through the mind in the course of the day, but are lost for want of committing them to paper. Seize them, Maria, as they pass, these Birds of Paradise, that show themselves and are gone, and make a grateful present of the precious fugitives to your friend.

To use a homely illustration, just rising in my fancy,— shall the good housewife take such pains in pickling and preserving her worthless fruits, her walnuts, her apricots, and quinces—and is there not much *spiritual housewifery* in treasuring up our mind's best fruits,—our heart's meditations in its most favoured moments?

This said simile is much in the fashion of the old moralizers, such as I conceive honest Baxter to have been, such as Quarles and Wither were, with their curious, serio-comic, quaint emblems. But they sometimes reach the heart, when a more elegant simile rests in the fancy.

Not low and mean, like these, but beautifully familiarized to our conceptions, and condescending to human thoughts and notions, are all the discourses of our LORD—conveyed in parable, or similitude, what easy access do they win to the heart, through the medium of the delighted imagination! speaking of heavenly things in fable, or in simile, drawn from earth, from objects *common, accustomed.*

Life's business, with such delicious little interruptions as our correspondence affords, how pleasant it is!—why can we not paint on the dull paper our whole feelings, exquisite as they rise up?

*From another Letter.*

——I had meant to have left off at this place; but, looking back, I am sorry to find too gloomy a cast tincturing my last page—a representation of life false and unthankful. Life is *not* all vanity and disappointment—it hath much of evil in it, no doubt; but to those who do not misuse it, it affords comfort, *temporary* comfort, much—much that endears us to it, and dignifies it—many true and good feelings, I trust, of which we need not be ashamed—hours of tranquillity and hope. But the morning was dull and overcast, and my spirits were under a cloud. I feel my error.

Is it no blessing, that we two love one another so dearly—that Allan is left me—that you are settled in life—that worldly affairs go smooth with us both—above all, that our lot hath fallen to us in a Christian country? Maria! these things are not little. I will consider life as a long feast, and not forget to say grace.

*From another Letter.*

——Allan has written to me—you know, he is on a visit at his old tutor's in Gloucestershire—he is to return home on Thursday—Allan is a dear boy—he concludes his letter, which is very affectionate throughout, in this manner—

"Elinor, I charge you to learn the following stanza by heart—

The monarch may forget his crown,
  That on his head an hour hath been;
The bridegroom may forget his bride
  Was made his wedded wife yestreen,
The mother may forget her child,
  That smiles so sweetly on her knee:
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
  And all that thou hast done for me.

The lines are in Burns—you know, we read him for the first time together at Margate—and I have been used to refer them to you, and to call you, in my mind, *Glencairn*—for you were always very, very good to me. I had a thousand failings, but you would love me in spite of them all. I am going to drink your health."

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I shall detain my reader no longer from the narrative.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THEY had but four rooms in the cottage. Margaret slept in the biggest room upstairs, and her granddaughter in a kind of closet adjoining where she could be within hearing, if her grandmother should call her in the night.

The girl was often disturbed in that manner—two or three times in a night she has been forced to leave her bed, to fetch her grandmother's cordials, or do some little service for her—but she knew, that Margaret's ailings were *real* and pressing, and Rosamund never complained—never suspected, that her grandmother's requisitions had anything unreasonable in them.

The night she parted with Miss Clare, she had helped Margaret to bed, as usual—and, after saying her prayers, as the custom was, kneeling by the old lady's bed-side, kissed her grandmother, and wished her a good-night—Margaret blessed her, and charged her to go to bed directly. It was her customary injunction, and Rosamund had never dreamed of disobeying.

So she retired to her little room. The night was warm and clear—the moon very bright—her window commanded a view of *scenes* she had been tracing in the day-time with Miss Clare.

All the events of the day past, the occurrences of their walk arose in her mind. She fancied she should like to retrace those scenes—but it was now nine o'clock, a late hour in the village.

Still she fancied it would be very charming; and then her grandmother's injunction came powerfully to her recollection—she sighed and turned from the window—and walked up and down her little room.

Ever, when she looked at the window, the wish returned. It was not so *very late*. The neighbours were yet about, passing under the window to their homes; she thought, and thought again, till her sensations became vivid, even to painfulness—her bosom was aching to give them vent.

The village clock struck ten! the neighbours ceased to pass under the window. Rosamund, stealing downstairs, fastened the latch behind her, and left the cottage.

One, that knew her, met her, and observed her with some surprise. Another recollects having wished her a good-night. Rosamund never returned to the cottage!

An old man, that lay sick in a small house adjoining to Margaret's, testified the next morning, that he had plainly heard the old creature calling for her granddaughter. All the night long she made her moan, and ceased not to call upon the name of Rosamund. But no Rosamund was there—the voice died away, but not till near daybreak.

When the neighbours came to search in the morning, Margaret was missing! She had *straggled* out of bed, and made her way into Rosamund's room—worn out with fatigue and fright, when she found the girl not there, she had laid herself down to die—and, it is thought, she died *praying*—for she was discovered in a kneeling posture, her arms and face extended on the pillow, where Rosamund had slept the night before—a smile was on her face in death.

## CHAPTER IX.

FAIN would I draw a veil over the transactions of that night—but I cannot—grief, and burning shame, forbid me to be silent—black deeds are about to be made public, which reflect a stain upon our common nature.

Rosamund, enthusiastic, and improvident, wandered unprotected to a distance from her guardian doors; through lonely glens, and woodwalks, where she had rambled many a *day* in safety; till she arrived at a shady copse, out of the hearing of any human habitation.

*Matravis* met her.——"Flown with insolence and wine," returning home late at night, he passed that way!

Matravis was a very ugly man. Sallow-complexioned! and, if hearts can wear that colour, his heart was sallow-complexioned also.

A young man with *grey* deliberation! cold and systematic in all his plans; and all his plans were evil. His very lust was systematic.

He would brood over his bad purposes for such a dreary length of time, that it might have been expected, some solitary check of conscience must have intervened to save him from commission. But that *light from heaven* was extinct in his dark bosom.

Nothing that is great, nothing that is amiable, existed for this unhappy man. He feared, he envied, he suspected; but he never loved. The sublime and beautiful in nature, the excellent and becoming in morals, were things placed beyond the capacity of his sensations. He loved not poetry—nor ever took a lonely walk to meditate—never beheld virtue, which he did not try to disbelieve, or female beauty and innocence, which he did not lust to contaminate.

A sneer was perpetually upon his face, and malice *grinning* at his heart. He would say the most ill-natured things, with the least remorse of any man I ever knew. This gained him the reputation of a wit—other *traits* got him the reputation of a villain.

And this man formerly paid his court to Elinor Clare! with what success I leave my readers to determine. It was not in Elinor's nature to despise any living thing—but in the estimation of this man, to be rejected was to be *despised;* and Matravis *never forgave.*

He had long turned his eyes upon Rosamund Gray. To steal from the bosom of her friends the jewel they prized so much, the little ewe lamb they held so dear, it was a scheme of delicate revenge, and Matravis had a twofold motive for accomplishing this young maid's ruin.

Often had he met her in her favourite solitudes, but found her ever cold and inaccessible. Of late the girl had avoided straying far from her own home, in the fear of meeting him—but she had never told her fears to Allan.

Matravis had, till now, been content to be a villain within the limits of the law—but, on the present occasion, hot fumes of wine, co-operating with his deep desire of revenge, and the insolence of an unhoped meeting, overcame his customary prudence, and Matravis rose, at once, to an audacity of glorious mischief.

Late at night he met her, a lonely, unprotected virgin—no friend at hand—no place near of refuge.

Rosamund Gray, my soul is exceeding sorrowful for thee—I loathe to tell the hateful circumstances of thy wrongs—Night and silence were the only witnesses of this young maid's disgrace—Matravis fled.

Rosamund, polluted and disgraced, wandered, an abandoned thing, about the fields and meadows till day-break. Not caring to return to the cottage, she sat herself down before the gate of Miss Clare's house—in a stupor of grief.

Elinor was just rising, and had opened the windows of her chamber, when she perceived her desolate young friend. She ran to embrace her—she brought her into the house—she took her to her bosom—she kissed her—she spake to her; but Rosamund could not speak.

Tidings came from the cottage. Margaret's death was an event which could not be kept concealed from Rosamund. When the sweet maid heard of it, she languished, and fell sick; she never held up her head after that time.

If Rosamund had been a *sister*, she could not have been kindlier treated, than by her two friends.

Allan had prospects in life; might, in time, have married into any of the first families in Hertfordshire; but Rosamund Gray, humbled though she was, and put to shame, had yet a charm for *him;* and he would have been content to share his fortunes with her yet, if Rosamund would have lived to be his companion.

But this was not to be, and the girl soon after died. She expired in the arms of Elinor—quiet, gentle, as she lived—thankful, that she died not among strangers—and expressing by signs, rather than words, a gratitude for the most trifling services, the common offices of humanity. She died uncomplaining; and this young maid, this untaught Rosamund, might have given a lesson to the grave philosopher in death.

## CHAPTER X.

I WAS but a boy, when these events took place. All the village remember the story, and tell of Rosamund Gray and old blind Margaret.

I parted from Allan Clare on that disastrous night, and set out for Edinburgh the next morning, before the facts were commonly known; I heard not of them—and it was four months before I received a letter from Allan.

"His heart," he told me, "was gone from him; for his sister had died of a phrenzy fever!" not a word of Rosamund in the letter—I was left to collect her story from sources which may one day be explained.

I soon after quitted Scotland, on the death of my father, and returned to my native village. Allan had left the place, and I could gain no information, whether he were dead or living.

I passed the *cottage.* I did not dare to look that way, or to inquire *who* lived there. A little dog, that had been Rosamund's, was yelping in my path. I laughed aloud like one mad, whose mind had suddenly gone from him; I stared vacantly around me, like one alienated from common perceptions.

But I was young at that time, and the impression became gradually weakened, as I mingled in the business of life. It is now *ten years* since these events took place, and I sometimes think of them as unreal. Allan Clare was a dear friend to me; but there are times, when Allan and his sister, Margaret and her granddaughter, appear like personages of a dream—an idle dream

## CHAPTER XI.

STRANGE things have happened unto me—I seem scarce awake—but I will re-collect my thoughts, and try to give an account of what hath befallen me in the few last weeks.

Since my father's death our family have resided in London. I am in practice as a surgeon there. My mother died two years after we left Widford.

A month or two ago I had been busying myself in drawing up the above narrative, intending to make it public. The employment had forced my mind

to dwell upon *facts*, which had begun to fade from it; the memory of old times became vivid, and more vivid—I felt a strong desire to revisit the scenes of my native village—of the young loves of Rosamund and her Clare.

A kind of dread had hitherto kept me back; but I was restless now, till I had accomplished my wish. I set out one morning to walk—I reached Widford about eleven in the forenoon—after a slight breakfast at my Inn—where I was mortified to perceive, the old landlord did not know me again—(old Thomas Billet—he has often made angle rods for me when a child)—I rambled over all my accustomed haunts.

Our old house was vacant, and to be sold. I entered, unmolested, into the room that had been my bed-chamber. I kneeled down on the spot where my little bed had stood—I felt like a child—I prayed like one—it seemed as though old times were to return again; I looked round involuntarily, expecting to see some face I knew—but all was naked and mute. The bed was gone. My little pane of painted window, through which I loved to look at the sun, when I awoke in a fine summer's morning, was taken out, and had been replaced by one of common glass.

I visited, by turns, every chamber—they were all desolate and unfurnished, one excepted, in which the owner had left a harpsichord, probably to be sold—I touched the keys—I played some old Scottish tunes, which had delighted me when a child. Past associations revived with the music—blended with a sense of *unreality*, which at last became too powerful—I rushed out of the room to give vent to my feelings.

I wandered, scarce knowing where, into an old wood, that stands at the back of the house—we called it the *wilderness*. A well-known *form* was missing, that used to meet me in this place—it was thine, Ben Moxam—the kindest, gentlest, politest, of human beings, yet was he nothing higher than a gardener in the family. Honest creature, thou didst never pass me in my childish rambles, without a soft speech, and a smile. I remember thy good-natured face. But there is one thing, for which I can never forgive thee, Ben Moxam; that thou didst join with an old maiden aunt of mine in a cruel plot, to lop away the hanging branches of the old fir-trees. I remember them sweeping to the ground.

I have often left my childish sports to ramble in this place—its glooms and its solitude had a mysterious charm for my young mind, nurturing within me that love of quietness and lonely thinking, which have accompanied me to maturer years.

In this *wilderness* I found myself after a ten years' absence. Its stately fir-trees were yet standing, with all their luxuriant company of underwood—the squirrel was there, and the melancholy cooings of the wood-pigeon; all was as I had left it—my heart softened at the sight—it seemed, as though my character had been suffering a *change*, since I forsook these shades.

My parents were both dead; I had no counsellor left, no experience of age to direct me, no sweet voice of reproof. The Lord had taken away my *friends*, and I knew not where he had laid them. I paced round the wilderness, seeking a comforter. I prayed, that I might be restored to that *state of innocence*, in which I had wandered in those shades.

Methought, my request was heard; for it seemed, as though the stains of manhood were passing from me, and I were relapsing into the purity and simplicity of childhood. I was content to have been moulded into a perfect child. I stood still, as in a trance. I dreamed, that I was enjoying a personal intercourse with my heavenly Father; and, extravagantly, put off the shoes from my feet—for the place where I stood, I thought, was holy ground.

This state of mind could not last long; and I returned, with languid feelings, to my Inn. I ordered my dinner—green peas and a sweetbread—it had been a favourite dish with me in my childhood—I was allowed to have it on

my birthdays. I was impatient to see it come upon table—but, when it came, I could scarce eat a mouthful; my tears choked me. I called for wine—I drank a pint and a half of red wine—and not till then had I dared to visit the churchyard, where my parents were interred.

The *cottage* lay in my way—Margaret had chosen it for that very reason, to be near the church—for the old lady was regular in her attendance on public worship—I passed on—and in a moment found myself among the tombs.

I had been present at my father's burial, and knew the spot again—my mother's funeral I was prevented by illness from attending—a plain stone was placed over the grave, with their initials carved upon it—for they both occupied one grave.

I prostrated myself before the spot; I kissed the earth that covered them—I contemplated, with gloomy delight, the time when I should mingle my dust with theirs—and kneeled, with my arms incumbent on the grave-stone, in a kind of mental prayer—for I could not speak.

Having performed these duties, I arose with quieter feelings, and felt leisure to attend to indifferent objects. Still I continued in the churchyard, reading the various inscriptions, and moralizing on them with that kind of levity, which will not unfrequently spring up in the mind, in the midst of deep melancholy.

I read of nothing but careful parents, loving husbands, and dutiful children. I said jestingly, where be all the *bad* people buried? Bad parents, bad husbands, bad children—what cemeteries are appointed for these? do they not sleep in consecrated ground? or is it but a pious fiction, a generous oversight, in the survivors, which thus tricks out men's epitaphs when dead, who in their life-time discharged the offices of life, perhaps, but lamely? Their failings, with their reproaches, now sleep with them in the grave. *Man wars not with the dead.* It is a *trait* of human nature, for which I love it.

I had not observed, till now, a little group assembled at the other end of the churchyard; it was a company of children, who were gathered round a young man, dressed in black, sitting on a gravestone.

He seemed to be asking them questions—probably, about their learning—and one little dirty ragged-headed fellow was clambering up his knees to kiss him. The children had been eating black cherries—for some of the stones were scattered about, and their mouths were smeared with them.

As I drew near them. I thought I discerned in the stranger a mild benignity of countenance, which I had somewhere seen before—I gazed at him more attentively.

It was Allan Clare! sitting on the grave of his sister.

I threw my arms about his neck. I exclaimed "Allan,"—he turned his eyes upon me—he knew me—we both wept aloud—it seemed as though the interval, since we parted, had been as nothing—I cried out, "Come, and tell me about these things."

I drew him away from his little friends—he parted with a show of reluctance from the churchyard—Margaret and her granddaughter lay buried there, as well as his sister—I took him to my Inn—secured a room, where we might be private—ordered fresh wine—scarce knowing what I did, I danced for joy.

Allan was quite overcome, and taking me by the hand he said, "This repays me for all."

It was a proud day for me—I had found the friend I thought dead—earth seemed to me no longer valuable, than as it contained *him;* and existence a blessing no longer than while I should live to be his comforter.

I began at leisure, to survey him with more attention. Time, and grief, had left few traces of that fine *enthusiasm* which once burned in his countenance—his eyes had lost their original fire, but they retained an uncommon sweetness, and, whenever they were turned upon me, their smile pierced to my heart.

"Allan, I fear you have been a sufferer." He replied not, and I could not press him further. I could not call the dead to life again.

So we drank, and told old stories—and repeated old poetry—and sung old songs—as if nothing had happened. We sat till very late—I forgot that I had purposed returning to town that evening—to Allan all places were alike—I grew noisy, he grew cheerful—Allan's old manners, old enthusiasm, were returning upon him—we laughed, we wept, we mingled our tears, and talked extravagantly.

Allan was my bedfellow that night—and we lay awake, planning schemes of living together under the same roof, entering upon similar pursuits;—and praising God that we had met.

I was obliged to return to town the next morning, and Allan proposed to accompany me. "Since the death of his sister," he told me, "he had been a wanderer."

In the course of our walk, he unbosomed himself without reserve—told me many particulars of his way of life for the last nine or ten years, which I do not feel myself at liberty to divulge.

Once, on my attempting to cheer him, when I perceived him over thoughtful, he replied to me in these words:

"Do not regard me as unhappy, when you catch me in these moods. I am never more happy than at times, when by the cast of my countenance men judge me most miserable.

"My friend, the events, which have left this sadness behind them, are of no recent date. The melancholy, which comes over me with the recollection of them, is not hurtful, but only tends to soften and tranquillize my mind, to detach me from the restlessness of human pursuits.

"The stronger I feel this detachment, the more I find myself drawn heavenward to the contemplation of spiritual objects.

"I love to keep old friendships alive and warm within me, because I expect a renewal of them in the *World of Spirits.*

"I am a wandering and unconnected thing on the earth. I have made no new friendships, that can compensate me for the loss of the old—and the more I know mankind, the more does it become necessary for me to supply their loss by little images, recollections, and circumstances, of past pleasures.

"I am sensible that I am surrounded by a multitude of very worthy people, plain-hearted souls, sincere, and kind. But they have hitherto eluded my pursuit, and will continue to bless the little circle of their families and friends, while I must remain a stranger to them.

"Kept at a distance by mankind, I have not ceased to love them—and could I find the cruel persecutor, the malignant instrument of God's judgments on me and mine, I think I would forgive, and try to love him too.

"I have been a quiet sufferer. From the beginning of my calamities it was given to me, not to see the hand of man in them. I perceived a mighty arm, which none but myself could see, extended over me. I gave my heart to the Purifier, and my will to the Sovereign Will of the Universe. The irresistible wheels of destiny passed on in their everlasting rotation,—and I suffered myself to be carried along with them, without complaining."

## CHAPTER XII.

Allan told me, that for some years past, feeling himself disengaged from every personal tie, but not alienated from human sympathies, it had been his taste, his *humour* he called it, to spend a great portion of his time in *hospitals* and *lazar-houses.*

He had found a *wayward pleasure,* he refused to name it a virtue, in tending

a description of people, who had long ceased to expect kindness or friendliness from mankind, but were content to accept the reluctant services, which the oftentimes unfeeling instruments and servants of these well-meant institutions deal out to the poor sick people under their care.

It is not medicine,—it is not broths and coarse meats, served up at a stated hour with all the hard formalities of a prison,—it is not the scanty dole of a bed to die on—which dying man requires from his species.

Looks, attentions, consolations,—in a word, *sympathies*, are what a man most needs in this awful close of mortal sufferings. A kind look, a smile, a drop of cold water to the parched lip—for these things a man shall bless you in death.

And these better things than cordials did Allan love to administer—to stay by a bedside the whole day, when something disgusting in a patient's distemper has kept the very nurses at a distance—to sit by, while the poor wretch got a little sleep—and be there to smile upon him when he awoke—to slip a guinea, now and then, into the hands of a nurse or attendant—these things have been to Allan as *privileges*, for which he was content to live, choice marks, and circumstances, of his Maker's goodness to him.

And I do not know whether occupations of this kind be not a spring of purer and nobler delight (certainly instances of a more disinterested virtue) than ariseth from what are called friendships of sentiment.

Between two persons of liberal education, like opinions, and common feelings, oftentimes subsists a vanity of sentiment, which disposes each to look upon the other as the only being in the universe worthy of friendship, or capable of understanding it,—themselves they consider as the solitary receptacles of all that is delicate in feeling, or stable in attachment:—when the odds are, that under every green hill, and in every crowded street, people of equal worth are to be found, who do more good in their generation, and make less noise in the doing of it.

It was in consequence of these benevolent propensities I have been describing, that Allan oftentimes discovered considerable inclinations in favour of my way of life, which I have before mentioned as being that of a Surgeon. He would frequently attend me on my visits to patients; and I began to think, that he had serious intentions of making my profession his study.

He was present with me at a scene—a *death-bed* scene—I shudder, when I do but think of it.

## CHAPTER XIII.

I WAS sent for the other morning to the assistance of a gentleman, who had been wounded in a duel,—and his wounds by unskilful treatment had been brought to a dangerous crisis.

The uncommonness of the name, which was *Matravis*, suggested to me, that this might possibly be no other than Allan's old enemy. Under this apprehension, I did what I could to dissuade Allan from accompanying me—but he seemed bent upon going, and even pleased himself with the notion, that it might lie within his ability to do the unhappy man some service. So he went with me.

When we came to the house, which was in Soho Square, we discovered that it was indeed the man—the identical Matravis, who had done all that mischief in times past—but not in a condition to excite any other sensation than pity in a heart more hard than Allan's.

Intense pain had brought on a delirium—we perceived this on first entering the room—for the wretched man was raving to himself—talking idly in mad, unconnected sentences,—that yet seemed, at times, to have a reference to *past facts*.

One while he told us his dream. "He had lost his way on a great heath, to which there seemed no end—it was cold, cold, cold—and dark, very dark—an old woman in leading-strings, *blind*, was groping about for a guide"—and then he frightened me,—for he seemed disposed to be *jocular*, and sung a song about an "old woman clothed in grey," and said "he did not believe in a devil."

Presently he bid us "not tell Allan Clare"—Allan was hanging over him at that very moment, sobbing. I could not resist the impulse, but cried out, "*This* is Allan Clare—Allan Clare is come to see you, my dear sir." The wretched man did not hear me, I believe, for he turned his head away, and began talking of *charnel houses*, and *dead men*, and "whether they knew anything that passed, in their coffins."

Matravis died that night.

# Mrs. Leicester's School.

[Under the title of "Mrs. Leicester's School: or, the History of Several Young Ladies, related by themselves," Mary Lamb brought out, in 1807, a collection of ten little homely narratives, seven of which were her own and the remaining three her brother's. These three, here subjoined, as integral portions of the works of Charles Lamb, follow, in due chronological sequence, the novelette of "Rosamund Gray." "Mrs. Leicester's School" was first published as a four shilling volume at the Juvenile Library, No. 41, Skinner Street. It ran into a second edition in 1808, into a third in 1810, and into a fourth in 1814, attaining the dignity of a tenth in 1828.]

## MARIA HOWE.

### THE EFFECTS OF WITCH STORIES

I WAS brought up in the country. From my infancy I was always a weak and tender-spirited girl, subject to fears and depressions. My parents, and particularly my mother, were of a very different disposition. They were what is usually called gay. They loved pleasure, and parties and visiting; but, as they found the turn of my mind to be quite opposite, they gave themselves little trouble about me, but upon such occasions generally left me to my choice, which was much oftener to stay at home, and indulge myself in my solitude, than to join in their rambling visits. I was always fond of being alone, yet always in a manner afraid. There was a book-closet which led into my mother's dressing-room. Here I was eternally fond of being shut up by myself, to take down whatever volumes I pleased, and pore upon them,—no matter whether they were fit for my years or no, or whether I understood them. Here, when the weather would not permit my going into the dark walk (*my walk*, as it was called) in the garden,—here, when my parents have been from home, I have stayed for hours together, till the loneliness, which pleased me so at first, has at length become quite frightful, and I have rushed out of the closet into the inhabited parts of the house, and sought refuge in the lap of

some one of the female servants, or of my aunt, who would say, seeing me look pale, that Maria had been frightening herself with some of those *nasty books*: so she used to call my favourite volumes, which I would not have parted with, no, not with one of the least of them, if I had had the choice to be made a fine princess and to govern the world. But my aunt was no reader. She used to excuse herself and say that reading hurt her eyes. I have been naughty enough to think that this was only an excuse; for I found that my aunt's weak eyes did not prevent her from poring ten hours a day upon her Prayer-book, or her favourite Thomas à Kempis. But this was always her excuse for not reading any of the books I recommended. My aunt was my father's sister. She had never been married. My father was a good deal older than my mother, and my aunt was ten years older than my father. As I was often left at home with her, and as my serious disposition so well agreed with hers, an intimacy grew up between the old lady and me; and she would often say that she loved only one person in the world, and that was me. Not that she and my parents were on very bad terms; but the old lady did not feel herself respected enough. The attention and fondness which she showed to me, conscious as I was that I was almost the only being that she felt anything like fondness to, made me love her, as it was natural: indeed I am ashamed to say that I fear I almost loved her better than both my parents put together. But there was an oddness, a silence, about my aunt, which was never interrupted but by her occasional expressions of love to me, that made me stand in fear of her. An odd look from under her spectacles would sometimes scare me away, when I have been peering up in her face, to make her kiss me. Then she had a way of muttering to herself, which, though it was good words and religious words that she was mumbling, somehow I did not like. My weak spirits, and the fears I was subject to, always made me afraid of any personal singularity or oddness in any one. I am ashamed, ladies, to lay open so many particulars of our family; but indeed it is necessary to the understanding of what I am going to tell you, of a very great weakness, if not wickedness, which I was guilty of towards my aunt. But I must return to my studies, and tell you what books I found in the closet, and what reading I chiefly admired. There was a great *Book of Martyrs*, in which I used to read, or rather I used to spell out meanings; for I was too ignorant to make out many words: but there it was written all about those good men who chose to be burnt alive rather than forsake their religion, and become naughty papists. Some words I could make out, some I could not: but I made out enough to fill my little head with vanity; and I used to think I was so courageous I could be burnt too; and I would put my hands upon the flames which were pictured in the pretty pictures which the book had, and feel them. But you know, ladies, there is a great difference between the flames in a picture and real fire; and I am now ashamed of the conceit which I had of my own courage, and think how poor a martyr I should have made in those days. Then there was a book not so big, but it had pictures in, it was called *Culpepper's Herbal*: it was full of pictures of plants and herbs; but I did not much care for that. Then there was *Salmon's Modern History*, out of which I picked a good deal. It had pictures of Chinese gods, and the great hooded serpent, which ran strangely in my fancy. There were some law books too; but the old English frighted me from reading them. But, above all, what I relished was *Stackhouse's History of the Bible*, where was the picture of the Ark, and all the beasts getting into it. This delighted me, because it puzzled me: and many an aching head have I got with poring into it, and contriving how it might be built, with such and such rooms, to hold all the world, if there should be another flood; and sometimes settling what pretty beasts should be saved, and what should not; for I would have no ugly or deformed beast in my pretty ark. But this was only a piece of folly and vanity, that a little reflection might cure

me of. Foolish girl that I was! to suppose that any creature is really ugly, that has all its limbs contrived with heavenly wisdom, and was doubtless formed to some beautiful end; though a child cannot comprehend it. Doubtless a frog or a toad is not uglier in itself than a squirrel or a pretty green lizard; but we want understanding to see it.

These fancies, ladies, were not so very foolish or naughty perhaps, but that they may be forgiven in a child of six years old; but what I am going to tell, I shall be ashamed of, and repent, I hope, as long as I live. It will teach me not to form rash judgments. Besides the picture of the Ark, and many others which I have forgot, Stackhouse contained one picture which made more impression upon my childish understanding than all the rest. It was the picture of the raising up of Samuel, which I used to call the Witch of Endor picture. I was always very fond of picking up stories about witches. There was a book called *Glanvil on Witches*, which used to lie about in this closet: it was thumbed about, and showed it had been much read in former times. This was my treasure. Here I used to pick out the strangest stories. My not being able to read them very well, probably made them appear more strange and out of the way to me. But I could collect enough to understand that witches were old women, who gave themselves up to do mischief; how, by the help of spirits as bad as themselves, they lamed cattle, and made the corn not grow; and how they made images of wax to stand for people that had done them any injury, or they thought had done them injury; and how they burnt the images before a slow fire, and stuck pins in them; and the persons which these waxen images represented, however far distant, felt all the pains and torments in good earnest which were inflicted in show upon these images: and such a horror I had of these wicked witches, that though I am now better instructed, and look upon all these stories as mere idle tales, and invented to fill people's heads with nonsense, yet I cannot recall to mind the horrors which I then felt, without shuddering, and feeling something of the old fit return.

This foolish book of witch stories had no pictures in it; but I made up for them out of my own fancy, and out of the great picture of the raising up of Samuel, in Stackhouse. I was not old enough to understand the difference there was between these silly, improbable tales, which imputed such powers to poor old women, who are the most helpless things in the creation, and the narrative in the Bible, which does not say that the witch, or pretended witch, raised up the dead body of Samuel by her own power, but, as it clearly appears, he was permitted by the divine will to appear, to confound the presumption of Saul; and that the witch herself was really as much frightened and confounded at the miracle as Saul himself, not expecting a real appearance, but probably having prepared some juggling, sleight-of-hand tricks, and sham appearance, to deceive the eyes of Saul; whereas neither she, nor any one living, had ever the power to raise the dead to life, but only He who made them from the first. These reasons I might have read in Stackhouse's book itself, if I had been old enough, and have read them in that very book since I was older; but at that time I looked at little beyond the picture.

These stories of witches so terrified me, that my sleep was often broken; and in my dreams I always had a fancy of a witch being in the room with me. I know now that it was only nervousness; but though I can laugh at it now as well as you, ladies, if you knew what I then suffered, you would be thankful that you have had sensible people about you to instruct you, and teach you better. I was let grow up wild, like an ill weed; and thrived accordingly. One night that I had been terrified in my sleep with my imaginations, I got out of bed and crept softly to the adjoining room. My room was next to where my aunt usually sat when she was alone. Into her room I crept for relief from my fears. The old lady was not yet retired to rest, but was sitting with her eyes half open, half closed, her spectacles tottering upon her nose; her head

nodding over her Prayer-book ; her lips mumbling the words as she read them, or half read them, in her dozing posture; her grotesque appearance, her old-fashioned dress, resembling what I had seen in that fatal picture in Stackhouse. All this, with the dead time of night, as it seemed to me (for I had gone through my first sleep), all joined to produce a wicked fancy in me, that the form that I had beheld was not my aunt, but some witch. Her mumbling of her prayers confirmed me in this shocking idea. I had read in Glanvil of those wicked creatures reading their prayers *backwards;* and I thought that this was the operation which her lips were at this time employed about. Instead of flying to her friendly lap for that protection which I had so often experienced when I have been weak and timid, I shrunk back, terrified and bewildered, to my bed, where I lay, in broken sleeps and miserable fancies, till the morning, which I had so much reason to wish for, came. My fancies a little wore away with the light; but an impression was fixed, which could not for a long time be done away. In the daytime, when my father and mother were about the house, when I saw them familiarly speak to my aunt, my fears all vanished; and when the good creature has taken me upon her knees, and shown me any kindness more than ordinary, at such times I have melted into tears, and longed to tell her of what naughty, foolish fancies I had had of her. But when night returned, that figure which I had seen recurred,—the posture, the half-closed eyes, the mumbling and muttering which I had heard. A confusion was in my head, *who* it was I had seen that night: it was my aunt, and it was not my aunt; it was that good creature, who loved me above all the world, engaged at her good task of devotions,—perhaps praying for some good to me. Again it was a witch, a creature hateful to God and man, reading backwards the good prayers; who would perhaps destroy me. In these conflicts of mind I passed several weeks, till, by a revolution in my fate, I was removed to the house of a female relation of my mother's in a distant part of the county, who had come on a visit to our house, and observing my lonely ways, and apprehensive of the ill effect of my mode of living upon my health, begged leave to take me home to her house to reside for a short time. I went, with some reluctance at leaving my closet, my dark walk, and even my aunt, who had been such a source of both love and terror to me. But I went, and soon found the good effects of a change of scene. Instead of melancholy closets and lonely avenues of trees, I saw lightsome rooms and cheerful faces. I had companions of my own age. No books were allowed me but what where rational or sprightly,—that gave me mirth, or gave me instruction. I soon learned to laugh at witch stories; and when I returned, after three or four months' absence, to our own house, my good aunt appeared to me in the same light in which I had viewed her from my infancy, before that foolish fancy possessed me; or rather, I should say, more kind, more fond, more loving than before. It is impossible to say how much good that lady (the kind relation of my mother's that I spoke of) did to me by changing the scene. Quite a new turn of ideas was given to me. I became sociable and companionable. My parents soon discovered a change in me; and I have found a similar alteration in them. They have been plainly more fond of me since that change, as from that time I learned to conform myself more to their way of living. I have never since had that aversion to company, and going out with them, which used to make them regard me with less fondness than they would have wished to show. I impute almost all that I had to complain of in their neglect to my having been a little unsociable, uncompanionable mortal. I lived in this manner for a year or two, passing my time between our house and the lady's who so kindly took me in hand, till, by her advice, I was sent to this school; where I have told you, ladies, what, for fear of ridicule, I never ventured to tell any person besides—the story of my foolish and naughty fancy.

# SUSAN YATES.

## FIRST TIME OF GOING TO CHURCH.

I WAS born and brought up in a house in which my parents had all their lives resided, which stood in the midst of that lonely tract of land called the Lincolnshire fens. Few families besides our own lived near the spot; both because it was reckoned an unwholesome air, and because its distance from any town or market made it an inconvenient situation. My father was in no very affluent circumstances; and it was a sad necessity which he was put to, of having to go many miles to fetch anything he wanted from the nearest village, which was full seven miles distant, through a sad miry way, that at all times made it heavy walking, and after rain was almost impassable. But he had no horse or carriage of his own.

The church, which belonged to the parish in which our house was situated, stood in this village; and its distance being, as I said before, seven miles from our house, made it quite an impossible thing for my mother or me to think of going to it. Sometimes, indeed, on a fine dry Sunday, my father would rise early, and take a walk to the village, just to see how *goodness thrived*, as he used to say; but he would generally return tired and the worse for his walk. It is scarcely possible to explain to any one who has not lived in the fens what difficult and dangerous walking it is. A mile is as good as four, I have heard my father say, in those parts. My mother, who in the early part of her life had lived in a more civilized spot, and had been used to constant church-going, would often lament her situation. It was from her I early imbibed a great curiosity and anxiety to see that thing which I had heard her call a church, and so often lament that she could never go to. I had seen houses of various structures, and had seen in pictures the shapes of ships and boats, and palaces and temples, but never rightly anything that could be called a church, or that could satisfy me about its form. Sometimes I thought it must be like our house: and sometimes I fancied it must be more like the house of our neighbour, Mr. Sutton, which was bigger and handsomer than ours. Sometimes I thought it was a great hollow cave, such as I have heard my father say the first inhabitants of the earth dwelt in. Then I thought it was like a waggon or a cart, and that it must be something movable. The shape of it ran in my mind strangely; and one day I ventured to ask my mother, what was that foolish thing that she was always longing to go to, and which she called a church. Was it anything to eat or drink, or was it only like a great huge plaything, to be seen and stared at?—I was not quite five years of age when I made this inquiry.

This question, so oddly put, made my mother smile: but, in a little time, she put on a more grave look, and informed me that a church was nothing that I had supposed it; but it was a great building, far greater than any house which I had seen, where men and women and children came together twice a day, on Sundays, to hear the Bible read, and make good resolutions for the week to come. She told me that the fine music which we sometimes heard in the air, came from the bells of St. Mary's church, and that we never heard it but when the wind was in a particular point. This raised my wonder more than all the rest; for I had somehow conceived that the noise which I heard

was occasioned by birds up in the air, or that it was made by the angels, whom (so ignorant I was till that time) I had always considered to be a sort of birds: for, before this time, I was totally ignorant of anything like religion; it being a principle of my father, that young heads should not be told too many things at once, for fear they should get confused ideas, and no clear notions of anything. We had always indeed so far observed Sundays, that no work was done upon that day; and upon that day I wore my best muslin frock, and was not allowed to sing or to be noisy; but I never understood why that day should differ from any other. We had no public meetings: indeed the few straggling houses which were near us would have furnished but a slender congregation; and the loneliness of the place we lived in, instead of making us more sociable, and drawing us closer together, as my mother used to say it ought to have done, seemed to have the effect of making us more distant and averse to society than other people. One or two good neighbours indeed we had, but not in numbers to give me an idea of church attendance.

But now my mother thought it high time to give me some clearer instruction in the main points of religion; and my father came readily into her plan. I was now permitted to sit up half an hour later on a Sunday evening, that I might hear a portion of Scripture read, which had always been their custom; though, by reason of my tender age, and my father's opinion on the impropriety of children being taught too young, I had never till now been an auditor. I was taught my prayers, and those things which you, ladies, I doubt not, had the benefit of being instructed in at a much earlier age.

The clearer my notions on these points became, they only made me more passionately long for the privilege of joining in that social service from which it seemed that we alone, of all the inhabitants of the land, were debarred: and when the wind was in that point which favoured the sound of the distant bells of St. Mary's to be heard over the great moor which skirted our house, I have stood out in the air to catch the sounds, which I almost devoured: and the tears have come in my eyes, when sometimes they seemed to speak to me, almost in articulate sounds, to *come to church*, and because of the great moor which was between me and them I could not come; and the too tender apprehensions of these things has filled me with a religious melancholy. With thoughts like these, I entered into my seventh year.

And now the time was come when the great moor was no longer to separate me from the object of my wishes and of my curiosity. My father having some money left him by the will of a deceased relation, we ventured to set up a sort of a carriage: no very superb one, I assure you, ladies; but in that part of the world it was looked upon with some envy by our poorer neighbours. The first party of pleasure which my father proposed to take in it was to the village where I had so often wished to go; and my mother and I were to accompany him: for it was very fit, my father observed, that little Susan should go to church, and learn how to behave herself; for we might some time or other have occasion to live in London, and not always be confined to that out-of-the-way spot.

It was on a Sunday morning that we set out, my little heart beating with almost breathless expectation. The day was fine, and the roads were as good as they ever are in those parts. I was so happy and so proud. I was lost in dreams of what I was going to see. At length the tall steeple of St. Mary's church came in view. It was pointed out to me by my father as the place from which that music had come which I have heard over the moor, and had fancied to be angels singing. I was wound up to the highest pitch of delight at having visibly presented to me the spot from which had proceeded that unknown friendly music; and when it began to peal, just as we approached the village, it seemed to speak, "*Susan is come,*" as plainly as it used to invite me *to come* when I heard it over the moor. I pass over our alighting at the

house of a relation, and all that passed till I went with my father and mother to church.

St. Mary's church is a great church for such a small village as it stands in. My father said it was a cathedral, and that it had once belonged to a monastery; but the monks were all gone. Over the door there was stone-work, representing saints and bishops; and here and there, along the sides of the church, there were figures of men's heads, made in a strange grotesque way. I have seen the same sort of figures in the round tower of the Temple Church in London. My father said they were very improper ornaments for such a place; and so I now think them; but it seems the people who built these great churches in old times, gave themselves more liberties than they do now; and I remember that when I first saw them, and before my father had made this observation, though they were so ugly and out of shape, and some of them seemed to be grinning, and distorting their figures with pain or with laughter, yet, being placed upon a church to which I had come with such serious thoughts, I could not help thinking they had some serious meaning; and I looked at them with wonder, but without any temptation to laugh. I somehow fancied they were the representation of wicked people, set up as a warning.

When we got into the church the service was not begun; and my father kindly took me round to show me the monuments, and everything else remarkable. I remember seeing one of a venerable figure, which my father said had been a judge. The figure was kneeling up, as if it was alive, before a sort of desk, with a book, I suppose the Bible, lying on it. I somehow fancied the figure had a sort of life in it, it seemed so natural; or that the dead judge, that it was done for, said his prayers at it still. This was a silly notion: but I was very young, and had passed my little life in a remote place, where I had never seen anything, nor knew anything; and the awe which I felt at first being in a church took from me all power but that of wondering. I did not reason about anything: I was too young. Now I understand why monuments are put up for the dead, and why the figures which are put upon them are described as doing the actions which they did in their lifetimes, and that they are a sort of pictures set up for our instruction. But all was new and surprising to me on that day,—the long windows with little panes, the pillars, the pews made of oak, the little hassocks for the people to kneel on, the form of the pulpit, with the sounding-board over it, gracefully carved in flower-work. To you, who have lived all your lives in populous places, and have been taken to church from the earliest time you can remember, my admiration of these things must appear strangely ignorant. But I was a lonely young creature, that had been brought up in remote places, where there was neither church, nor church-going inhabitants. I have since lived in great towns, and seen the ways of churches and of worship; and I am old enough now to distinguish between what is essential in religion, and what is merely formal or ornamental.

When my father had done pointing out to me the things most worthy of notice about the church, the service was almost ready to begin: the parishioners had most of them entered, and taken their seats; and we were shown into a pew, where my mother was already seated. Soon after, the clergyman entered, and the organ began to play what is called the voluntary. I had never seen so many people assembled before. At first I thought that all eyes were upon me, and that because I was a stranger. I was terribly ashamed and confused at first: but mother helped me to find out the places in the Prayer-book; and being busy about that, took off some of my painful apprehensions. I was no stranger to the order of the service, having often read in a Prayer-book at home: but, my thoughts being confused, it puzzled me a little to find out the responses and other things which I thought I knew so well; but

I went through it tolerably well. One thing which has often troubled me since is, that I am afraid I was too full of myself, and of thinking how happy I was, and what a privilege it was for one that was so young to join in the service with so many grown people; so that I did not attend enough to the instruction which I might have received. I remember, I foolishly applied everything that was said to myself, so as it could mean nobody but myself, I was so full of my own thoughts. All that assembly of people seemed to me as if they were come together only to show me the way of a church. Not but I received some very affecting impressions from some things which I heard that day: but the standing-up and the sitting-down of the people, the organ, the singing,—the way of all these things took up more of my attention than was proper: or I thought it did. I believed I behaved better, and was more serious, when I went a second time and a third time: for now we went, as a regular thing every Sunday; and continued to do so, till, by a still further change for the better in my father's circumstances, we removed to London. Oh! it was a happy day for me, my first going to St. Mary's church; before that day, I used to feel like a little outcast in the wilderness; like one that did not belong to the world of Christian people. I have never felt like a little outcast since. But I never can hear the sweet noise of bells, that I don't think of the angels singing, and what poor but pretty thoughts I had of angels in my uninstructed solitude.

# ARABELLA HARDY.

## THE SEA VOYAGE.

I WAS born in the East Indies. I lost my father and mother young. At the age of five my relations thought it proper that I should be sent to England for my education. I was to be entrusted to the care of a young woman who had a character for great humanity and discretion; but just as I had taken leave of my friends, and we were about to take our passage, the young woman was taken suddenly ill, and could not go on board. In this unpleasant emergency no one knew how to act. The ship was at the very point of sailing, and it was the last ship which was to sail that season. At length the captain, who was known to my friends, prevailed upon my relation, who had come with us to see us embark, to leave the young woman on shore, and to let me embark separately. There was no possibility of getting any other female attendant for me in the short time allotted for our preparation; and the opportunity of going by that ship was thought too valuable to be lost. No other ladies happened to be going; so I was consigned to the care of the captain and his crew—rough and unaccustomed attendants for a young creature, delicately brought up as I had been: but, indeed, they did their best to make me not feel the difference. The unpolished sailors were my nursery-maids and my waiting-women. Every thing was done by the captain and the men to accommodate me, and make me easy. I had a little room made out of the cabin, which was to be considered as my room, and nobody might enter into it. The first mate had a great character for bravery and all sailor-like accom-

plishments; but with all this he had a gentleness of manners, and a pale feminine cast of face, from ill health and a weakly constitution, which subjected him to some ridicule from the officers, and caused him to be named Betsy. He did not much like the appellation; but he submitted to it the better, as he knew that those who gave him a woman's name well knew that he had a man's heart, and that in the face of danger, he would go as far as any man. To this young man, whose real name was Charles Atkinson, by a lucky thought of the captain, the care of me was especially entrusted. Betsy was proud of his charge; and, to do him justice, acquitted himself with great diligence and adroitness through the whole of the voyage. From the beginning I had somehow looked upon Betsy as a woman, hearing him so spoken of; and this reconciled me in some measure to the want of a maid, which I had been used to. But I was a manageable girl at all times, and gave nobody much trouble.

I have not knowledge enough to give an account of my voyage, or to remember the names of the seas we passed through, or the lands which we touched upon in our course. The chief thing I can remember (for I do not remember the events of the voyage in any order) was Atkinson taking me up on deck to see the great whales playing about in the sea. There was one great whale came bounding up out of the sea, and then he would dive into it again, and then would come up at a distance where nobody expected him: and another whale was following after him. Atkinson said they were at play, and that the lesser whale loved that bigger whale, and kept it company all through the wide seas; but I thought it strange play, and a frightful kind of love; for I every minute expected they would come up to our ship and toss it. But Atkinson said a whale was a gentle creature; and it was a sort of sea-elephant; and that the most powerful creatures in nature are always the least hurtful. And he told me how men went out to take these whales, and stuck long pointed darts into them; and how the sea was discoloured with the blood of these poor whales for many mile's distance; and I admired the courage of the men; but I was sorry for the inoffensive whale. Many other pretty sights he used to show me, when he was not on watch or doing some duty for the ship. No one was more attentive to his duty than he: but at such times as he had leisure, he would show me all pretty sea-sights—the dolphins and porpoises that came before a storm; and all the colours which the sea changed to—how sometimes it was a deep blue, and then a deep green, and sometimes it would seem all on fire. All these various appearances he would show me, and attempt to explain the reason of them to me as well as my young capacity would admit of. There was a lion and a tiger on board, going to England as a present to the king; and it was a great diversion to Atkinson and me, after I had got rid of my first terrors, to see the ways of these beasts in their dens, and how venturous the sailors were in putting their hands through the grates, and patting their rough coats. Some of the men had monkeys, which ran loose about; and the sport was for the men to lose them and find them again. The monkeys would run up the shrouds, and pass from rope to rope, with ten times greater alacrity than the most experienced sailor could follow them: and sometimes they would hide themselves in the most unthought-of places; and when they were found they would grin, and make mouths as if they had sense. Atkinson described to me the ways of these little animals in their native woods; for he had seen them. Oh, how many ways he thought of to amuse me in that long voyage!

Sometimes he would describe to me the odd shapes and varieties of fishes that were in the sea; and tell me tales of the sea-monsters that lay hid at the bottom, and were seldom seen by men; and what a glorious sight it would be if our eyes could be sharpened to behold all the inhabitants of the sea at once, swimming in the great deeps, as plain as we see the gold and silver fish in a

bowl of glass. With such notions he enlarged my infant capacity to take in many things.

When in foul weather I have been terrified at the motion of the vessel as it rocked backwards and forwards, he would still my fears, and tell me that I used to be rocked so once in a cradle; and that the sea was God's bed, and the ship our cradle, and we were as safe in that greater motion as when we felt that lesser one in our little wooden sleeping-places. When the wind was up, and sang through the sails, and disturbed me with its violent clamours, he would call it music, and bid me hark to the sea-organ; and with that name he quieted my tender apprehensions. When I have looked around with a mournful face at seeing all *men* about me, he would enter into my thoughts, and tell me pretty stories of his mother and his sisters, and a female cousin that he loved better than his sisters, whom he called Jenny; and say that, when we got to England, I should go and see them; and how fond Jenny would be of his little daughter, as he called me. And with these images of women and females which he raised in my fancy, he quieted me for a time. One time, and never but once, he told me that Jenny had promised to be his wife, if ever he came to England; but that he had his doubts whether he should live to get home, for he was very sickly. This made me cry bitterly.

That I dwell so long upon the attentions of this Atkinson is only because his death, which happened just before we got to England, affected me so much, that he alone of all the ship's crew has engrossed my mind ever since; though, indeed, the captain and all were singularly kind to me, and strove to make up for my uneasy and unnatural situation. The boatswain would pipe for my diversion, and the sailor-boy would climb the dangerous mast for my sport. The rough foremast-man would never willingly appear before me till he had combed his long black hair smooth and sleek, not to terrify me. The officers got up a sort of a play for my amusement; and Atkinson, or, as they called him, Betsy, acted the heroine of the piece. All ways that could be contrived were thought upon to reconcile me to my lot. I was the universal favourite: I do not know how deservedly; but I suppose it was because I was alone, and there was no female in the ship besides me. Had I come over with female relations or attendants, I should have excited no particular curiosity: I should have required no uncommon attentions. I was one little woman among a crew of men; and I believe the homage which I have read that men universally pay to women was in this case directed to me, in the absence of all other womankind. I do not know how that might be; but I was a little princess among them, and I was not six years old.

I remember the first drawback which happened to my comfort was Atkinson's not appearing during the whole of one day. The captain tried to reconcile me to it by saying that Mr. Atkinson was confined to his cabin; that he was not quite well, but a day or two would restore him. I begged to be taken in to see him; but this was not granted. A day, and then another came, and another, and no Atkinson was visible; and I saw apparent solicitude in the faces of all the officers, who, nevertheless, strove to put on their best countenances before me, and to be more than usually kind to me. At length, by the desire of Atkinson himself, as I have since learned, I was permitted to go into his cabin, and see him. He was sitting up, apparently in a state of great exhaustion; but his face lighted up when he saw me; and he kissed me, and told me that he was going a great voyage, far longer than that which we had passed together, and he should never come back. And, though I was so young, I understood well enough that he meant this of his death; and I cried sadly: but he comforted me, and told me that I must be his little executrix, and perform his last will, and bear his last words to his mother and his sister, and to his cousin Jenny, whom I should see in a short time; and he gave me his blessing as a father would bless his child; and he sent a last kiss by me to

all his female relations; and he made me promise that I would go and see them when I got to England. And soon after this he died: but I was in another part of the ship when he died; and I was not told it till we got to shore, which was a few days after; but they kept telling me that he was better and better, and that I should soon see him, but that it disturbed him to talk with any one. Oh, what a grief it was, when I learned that I had lost my old shipmate, that had made an irksome situation so bearable by his kind assiduities; and to think that he was gone, and I could never repay him for his kindness!

When I had been a year and a half in England, the captain, who had made another voyage to India and back, thinking that time had alleviated a little the sorrow of Atkinson's relations, prevailed upon my friends who had the care of me in England, to let him introduce me to Atkinson's mother and sister. Jenny was no more. She had died in the interval; and I never saw her. Grief for his death had brought on a consumption, of which she lingered about a twelvemonth, and then expired. But in the mother and the sisters of this excellent young man I have found the most valuable friends which I possess on this side the great ocean. They received me from the captain as the little *protégée* of Atkinson, and from them I have learned passages of his former life; and this in particular,—that the illness of which he died was brought on by a wound, of which he never quite recovered, which he got in a desperate attempt, when he was quite a boy, to defend his captain against a superior force of the enemy which had boarded him, and which, by his premature valour inspiriting the men, they finally succeeded in repulsing. This was that Atkinson who, from his pale and feminine appearance, was called Betsy. This was he whose womanly care of me got him the name of a woman; who, with more than female attention, condescended to play the handmaid to a little unaccompanied orphan, whom fortune had cast upon the care of a rough sea-captain and his rougher crew.

# Tales from Shakspere.

[Another work, written conjointly by Charles and Mary Lamb, appeared in 1807, in two volumes, price eight shillings, entitled the "Tales from Shakspere, designed for the use of young persons." These two volumes, illustrated with copperplates, were issued from the press by Thomas Hodgkins, at the Juvenile Library, Hanway Street, opposite Soho Square, Oxford Street. An earlier piecemeal imprint of the work, in eight sixpenny numbers, had been published immediately before this by M. J. Godwin, the owner of the copyright. Twenty out of the thirty-six dramas were thus commemorated: those not comprised in the collection being the Historical Plays, "Love's Labour's Lost," and "The Merry Wives of Windsor." Of the score thus condensed into a series of prose narratives, fourteen were written by Mary Lamb, and six by her brother. Oddly enough, Mary Lamb, with her tragic surroundings, selected as her theme the Comedies, while Elia, the inimitable humorist, selected as his the Tragedies! Published originally in 1807, the work ran into a second edition in 1808; a third edition being issued from the press in 1816, with plates, by William Mulready; the fourth edition being embellished by William Blake, and the fifth by William Harvey. Numerous other reprints have since appeared, one of the latest of these being adorned with chromolithographs from

designs by Sir John Gilbert. In 1860, a German translation of the work was produced by Dr. F. Bultz. As a matter of course, the half-dozen tragical "Tales from Shakspere," as told by Charles Lamb, are alone here given.]

# KING LEAR.

LEAR, King of Britain, had three daughters: Goneril, wife to the Duke of Albany; Regan, wife to the Duke of Cornwall; and Cordelia, a young maid, for whose love the King of France and Duke of Burgundy were joint suitors, and were at this time making stay for that purpose in the court of Lear.

The old king, worn out with age and the fatigues of government, he being more than fourscore years old, determined to take no further part in state affairs, but to leave the management to younger strengths, that he might have time to prepare for death, which must at no long period ensue. With this intent he called his three daughters to him, to know from their own lips which of them loved him best, that he might part his kingdom among them in such proportions as their affection for him should seem to deserve.

Goneril, the eldest, declared that she loved her father more than words could give out, that he was dearer to her than the light of her own eyes, dearer than life and liberty, with a deal of such professing stuff, which is easy to counterfeit where there is no real love, only a few fine words delivered with confidence being wanted in that case. The king, delighted to hear from her own mouth this assurance of her love, and thinking truly that her heart went with it, in a fit of fatherly fondness bestowed upon her and her husband one-third of his ample kingdom.

Then calling to him his second daughter, he demanded what she had to say. Regan, who was made of the same hollow metal as her sister, was not a whit behind in her professions, but rather declared that what her sister had spoken came short of the love which she professed to bear for his highness; insomuch that she found all other joys dead, in comparison with the pleasure which she took in the love of her dear king and father.

Lear blessed himself in having such loving children, as he thought; and could do no less, after the handsome assurances which Regan had made, than bestow a third of his kingdom upon her and her husband, equal in size to that which he had already given away to Goneril.

Then turning to his youngest daughter Cordelia, whom he called his joy, he asked what she had to say; thinking no doubt that she would glad his ears with the same loving speeches which her sisters had uttered, or rather that her expressions would be so much stronger than theirs, as she had always been his darling, and favoured by him above either of them. But Cordelia, disgusted with the flattery of her sisters, whose hearts she knew were far from their lips, and seeing that all their coaxing speeches were only intended to wheedle the old king out of his dominions, that they and their husbands might reign in his lifetime, made no other reply but this,—that she loved his majesty according to her duty, neither more nor less.

The king, shocked with this appearance of ingratitude in his favourite child, desired her to consider her words, and to mend her speech, lest it should mar her fortunes.

Cordelia then told her father, that he was her father, that he had given her breeding, and loved her; that she returned those duties back as was most fit, and did obey him, love him, and most honour him. But that she could not frame her mouth to such large speeches as her sisters had done, or promise to love nothing else in the world. Why had her sisters husbands, if (as they said) they had no love for anything but their father? If she should ever wed, she

was sure the lord to whom she gave her hand would want half her love, half of her care and duty; she should never marry like her sisters, to love her father all.

Cordelia, who in earnest loved her old father even almost as extravagantly as her sisters pretended to do, would have plainly told him so at any other time, in more daughter-like and loving terms, and without these qualifications, which did indeed sound a little ungracious; but after the crafty flattering speeches of her sisters, which she had seen draw such extravagant rewards after them, she thought the handsomest thing she could do was to love and be silent. This put her affection out of suspicion of mercenary ends, and showed that she loved, but not for gain; and that her professions, the less ostentatious they were, had so much the more of truth and sincerity than her sisters'.

This plainness of speech, which Lear called pride, so enraged the old monarch—who in his best of times always showed much of spleen and rashness, and in whom the dotage incident to old age had so clouded over his reason, that he could not discern truth from flattery, nor a gay painted speech from words that came from the heart—that in a fury of resentment he retracted the third part of his kingdom which yet remained, which he had reserved for Cordelia, and gave it away from her, sharing it equally between her two sisters and their husbands, the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall: whom he now called to him, and in presence of all his courtiers, bestowing a coronet between them, invested them jointly with all the power, revenue, and execution of government, only retaining to himself the name of king; all the rest of royalty he resigned; with this reservation, that himself, with a hundred knights for his attendants, was to be maintained by monthly course in each of his daughters' palaces in turn.

So preposterous a disposal of his kingdom, so little guarded by reason, and so much by passion, filled all his courtiers with astonishment and sorrow; but none of them had the courage to interpose between this incensed king and his wrath, except the Earl of Kent, who was beginning to speak a good word for Cordelia, when the passionate Lear, on pain of death, commanded him to desist: but the good Kent was not so to be repelled. He had been ever loyal to Lear, whom he had honoured as a king, loved as a father, followed as a master; and had never esteemed his life further than as a pawn to wage against his royal master's enemies, nor feared to lose it when Lear's safety was the motive; nor now that Lear was most his own enemy, did this faithful servant of the king forget his old principles, but manfully opposed Lear, to do Lear good; and was unmannerly only because Lear was mad. He had been a most faithful counsellor in times past to the king, and he besought him now, that he would see with his eyes (as he had done in many weighty matters), and go by his advice still; and in his best consideration recall this hideous rashness: for he would answer with his life, his judgment that Lear's youngest daughter did not love him least, nor were those empty-hearted whose low sound gave no token of hollowness. When power bowed to flattery, honour was bound to plainness. For Lear's threats, what could he do to him, whose life was already at his service? that should not hinder duty from speaking.

The honest freedom of this good Earl of Kent only stirred up the king's wrath the more, and like a frantic patient who kills his physician, and loves his mortal disease, he banished this true servant, and allotted him but five days to make his preparations for departure; but if on the sixth his hated person was found in the realm of Britain, that moment was to be his death. And Kent bade farewell to the king, and said that since he chose to show himself in such fashion, it was but banishment to stay there; and before he went he recommended Cordelia to the protection of the gods, the maid who had so

rightly thought, and so discreetly spoken; and only wished that her sisters' large speeches might be answered with deeds of love: and then he went, as he said, to shape his old course to a new country.

The King of France and Duke of Burgundy were now called in to hear the determination of Lear about his youngest daughter, and to know whether they would persist in their courtship to Cordelia, now that she was under her father's displeasure, and had no fortune but her own person to recommend her: and the Duke of Burgundy declined the match, and would not take her to wife upon such conditions; but the King of France, understanding what the nature of the fault had been which had lost her the love of her father, that it was only a tardiness of speech, and the not being able to frame her tongue to flattery like her sisters, took this young maid by the hand, and saying that her virtues were a dowry above a kingdom, bade Cordelia to take farewell of her sisters, and of her father, though he had been unkind, and she should go with him, and be queen of him and of fair France, and reign over fairer possessions than her sisters: and he called the Duke of Burgundy in contempt a waterish duke, because his love for this young maid had in a moment run all away like water.

Then Cordelia, with weeping eyes, took leave of her sisters, and besought them to love their father well, and make good their professions: and they sullenly told her not to prescribe to them, for they knew their duty; but to strive to content her husband, who had taken her (as they tauntingly expressed it) as Fortune's alms. And Cordelia, with a heavy heart departed, for she knew the cunning of her sisters, and she wished her father in better hands than she was about to leave him in.

Cordelia was no sooner gone than the devilish dispositions of her sisters began to show themselves in their true colours. Even before the expiration of the first month, which Lear was to spend by agreement with his eldest daughter Goneril, the old king began to find out the difference between promises and performances. This wretch having got from her father all that he had to bestow, even to the giving-away of the crown from off his head, began to grudge even those small remnants of royalty which the old man had reserved to himself, to please his fancy with the idea of being still a king. She could not bear to see him and his hundred knights. Every time she met her father she put on a frowning countenance; and when the old man wanted to speak with her, she would feign sickness, or anything to be rid of the sight of him; for it was plain that she esteemed his old age a useless burden, and his attendants an unnecessary expense: not only she herself slackened in her expressions of duty to the king, but by her example, and (it is to be feared) not without her private instructions, her very servants affected to treat him with neglect, and would either refuse to obey his orders, or still more contemptuously pretend not to hear them. Lear could not but perceive this alteration in the behaviour of his daughter, but he shut his eyes against it as long as he could, as people commonly are unwilling to believe the unpleasant consequences which their own mistakes and obstinacy have brought upon them.

True love and fidelity are no more to be estranged by *ill*, than falsehood and hollow-heartedness can be conciliated by *good usage*. This eminently appears in the instance of the good Earl of Kent, who, though banished by Lear, and his life made forfeit if he were found in Britain, chose to stay and abide all consequences, as long as there was a chance of his being useful to the king his master. See to what mean shifts and disguises poor loyalty is forced to submit sometimes; yet it counts nothing base or unworthy, so as it can but do service where it owes an obligation! In the disguise of a serving-man, all his greatness and pomp laid aside, this good earl proffered his services to the king, who not knowing him to be Kent in that disguise, but pleased with a certain plainness, or rather bluntness in his answers which the earl put on (so different from

that smooth oily flattery which he had so much reason to be sick of, having found the effects not answerable in his daughter), a bargain was quickly struck, and Lear took Kent into his service by the name of Caius, as he called himself, never suspecting him to be his once great favourite, the high and mighty Earl of Kent.

This Caius quickly found means to show his fidelity and love to his royal master; for Goneril's steward that same day behaving in a disrespectful manner to Lear, and giving him saucy looks and language, as no doubt he was secretly encouraged to do by his mistress, Caius, not enduring to hear so open an affront put upon majesty, made no more ado but presently tripped up his heels, and laid the unmannerly slave in the kennel; for which friendly service Lear became more and more attached to him.

Nor was Kent the only friend Lear had. In his degree, and as far as so insignificant a personage could show his love, the poor fool, or jester, that had been of his palace while Lear had a palace, as it was the custom of kings and great personages at that time to keep a fool (as he was called) to make them sport after serious business: this poor fool clung to Lear after he had given away his crown, and by his witty sayings would keep up his good humour, though he could not refrain sometimes from jeering at his master for his imprudence, in uncrowning himself, and giving all away to his daughters: at which time, as he rhymingly expressed it, these daughters—

For sudden joy did weep
  And he for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
  And go the fools among.

And in such wild sayings, and scraps of songs, of which he had plenty, this pleasant honest fool poured out his heart even in the presence of Goneril herself, in many a bitter taunt and jest which cut to the quick: such as comparing the king to the hedge-sparrow, who feeds the young of the cuckoo till they grow old enough, and then has its head bit off for its pains; and saying, that an ass may know when the cart draws the horse (meaning that Lear's daughters, that ought to go behind, now ranked before their father): and that Lear was no longer Lear, but the shadow of Lear: for which free speeches he was once or twice threatened to be whipped.

The coolness and falling off of respect which Lear had begun to perceive, were not all which this foolish-fond father was to suffer from his unworthy daughter: she now plainly told him that his staying in her palace was inconvenient so long as he insisted upon keeping up an establishment of a hundred knights; that this establishment was useless and expensive, and only served to fill her court with riot and feasting; and she prayed him that he would lessen their number, and keep none but old men about him, such as himself, fitting his age.

Lear at first could not believe his eyes or ears, nor that it was his daughter who spoke so unkindly. He could not believe that she who had received a crown from him could seek to cut off his train, and grudge him the respect due to his old age. But she persisting in her undutiful demand, the old man's rage was so excited, that he called her a detested kite, and said that she spoke an untruth; and so indeed she did, for the hundred knights were all men of choice behaviour and sobriety of manners, skilled in all particulars of duty, and not given to rioting and feasting, as she said. And he bid his horses to be prepared, for he would go to his other daughter, Regan, he and his hundred knights: and he spoke of ingratitude, and said it was a marble-hearted devil, and showed more hideous in a child than the sea-monster. And he cursed his eldest daughter Goneril so as was terrible to hear; praying that she might never have a child, or if she had, that it might live to return that scorn and contempt

upon her which she had shown to him; that she might feel how sharper than a serpent's tooth it was to have a thankless child. And Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany, beginning to excuse himself for any share which Lear might suppose he had in the unkindness, Lear would not hear him out, but in a rage ordered his horses to be saddled, and set out with his followers for the abode of Regan, his other daughter. And Lear thought to himself how small the fault of Cordelia (if it was a fault) now appeared, in comparison with her sister's, and he wept; and then he was ashamed that such a creature as Goneril should have so much power over his manhood as to make him weep.

Regan and her husband were keeping their court in great pomp and state at their palace; and Lear despatched his servant Caius with letters to his daughter, that she might be prepared for his reception, while he and his train followed after. But it seems that Goneril had been beforehand with him, sending letters also to Regan, accusing her father of waywardness and ill-humours, and advising her not to receive so great a train as he was bringing with him. This messenger arrived at the same time with Caius, and Caius and he met: and who should it be but Caius's old enemy the steward, whom he had formerly tripped up by the heels for his saucy behaviour to Lear. Caius, not liking the fellow's look, and suspecting what he came for, began to revile him, and challenged him to fight, which the fellow refusing, Caius, in a fit of honest passion, beat him soundly, as such a mischief-maker and carrier of wicked messages deserved; which, coming to the ears of Regan and her husband, they ordered Caius to be put in the stocks, though he was a messenger from the king her father, and in that character demanded the highest respect: so that the first thing the king saw when he entered the castle was his faithful servant Caius sitting in that disgraceful situation.

This was but a bad omen of the reception which he was to expect; but a worse followed when, upon inquiring for his daughter and her husband, he was told they were weary with travelling all night, and could not see him; and when, lastly, upon his insisting in a positive and angry manner to see them, they came to greet him, whom should he see in their company but the hated Goneril, who had come to tell her own story, and set her sister against the king her father.

This sight much moved the old man, and still more to see Regan take her by the hand; and he asked Goneril if she was not ashamed to look upon his old white beard? And Regan advised him to go home again with Goneril, and live with her peaceably, dismissing half of his attendants, and to ask her forgiveness; for he was old and wanted discretion, and must be ruled and led by persons that had more discretion than himself. And Lear showed how preposterous that would sound, if he were to down on his knees, and beg of his own daughter for food and raiment, and he argued against such an unnatural dependence, declaring his resolution never to return with her, but to stay where he was with Regan, he and his hundred knights; for he said that she had not forgot the half of the kingdom which he had endowed her with, and that her eyes were not fierce like Goneril's, but mild and kind. And he said that rather than return to Goneril, with half his train cut off, he would go over to France, and beg a wretched pension of the king there, who had married his youngest daughter without a portion.

But he was mistaken in expecting kinder treatment of Regan than he had experienced from her sister Goneril. As if willing to outdo her sister in unfilial behaviour, she declared that she thought fifty knights too many to wait upon him—that five-and-twenty were enough. Then Lear, nigh heart-broken, turned to Goneril, and said that he would go back with her, for her fifty doubled five-and-twenty, and so her love was twice as much as Regan's. But Goneril excused herself, and said, what need of so many as five-and-twenty? or even ten? or five? when he might be waited upon by her servants, or her sister's

servants? So these two wicked daughters, as if they strove to exceed each other in cruelty to their old father who had been so good to them, by little and little would have abated him of all his train, all respect (little enough for him that once commanded a kingdom), which was left him to show that he had once been a king! Not that a splendid train is essential to happiness, but from a king to a beggar is a hard change, from commanding millions to be without one attendant; and it was the ingratitude in his daughters' denying it, more than what he would suffer by the want of it, which pierced this poor king to the heart; insomuch, that with this double ill-usage, and vexation for having so foolishly given away a kingdom, his wits began to be unsettled, and while he said he knew not what, he vowed revenge against those unnatural hags, and to make examples of them that should be a terror to the earth!

While he was thus idly threatening what his weak arm could never execute, night came on, and a loud storm of thunder and lightning with rain; and his daughters still persisting in their resolution not to admit his followers, he called for his horses, and chose rather to encounter the utmost fury of the storm abroad than stay under the same roof with these ungrateful daughters: and they, saying that the injuries which wilful men procure to themselves are their just punishment, suffered him to go in that condition, and shut their doors upon him.

The winds were high, and the rain and storm increased, when the old man sallied forth to combat with the elements, less sharp than his daughters' unkindness. For many miles about there was scarce a bush; and there, upon a heath, exposed to the fury of the storm in a dark night, did king Lear wander out, and defy the winds and the thunder: and he bid the winds to blow the earth into the sea, or swell the waves of the sea till they drowned the earth, that no token might remain of any such ungrateful animal as man. The old king was now left with no other companion than the poor fool, who still abided with him, with his merry conceits striving to outjest misfortune, saying it was but a naughty night to swim in, and truly the king had better go in and ask his daughters' blessing:

> But he that has a little tiny wit,
> With heigh ho, the wind and the rain!
> Must make content with his fortunes fit,
> Though the rain it raineth every day:

and swearing it was a brave night to cool a lady's pride.

Thus poorly accompanied, this once great monarch was found by his ever faithful servant the good Earl of Kent, now transformed to Caius, who ever followed close at his side, though the king did not know him to be the earl; and he said, "Alas! sir, are you here? creatures that love night, love not such nights as these. This dreadful storm has driven the beasts to their hiding-places. Man's nature cannot endure the affliction or the fear." And Lear rebuked him, and said these lesser evils were not felt, where a greater malady was fixed. When the mind is at ease, the body has leisure to be delicate; but the tempest in his mind did take all feeling else from his senses, but of that which beat at his heart. And he spoke of filial ingratitude, and said it was all one as if the mouth should tear the hand for lifting food to it; for parents were hands and food and everything to children.

But the good Caius still persisting in his entreaties that the king would not stay out in the open air, at last persuaded him to enter a little wretched hovel which stood upon the heath, where the fool first entering, suddenly ran back terrified, saying that he had seen a spirit. But upon examination this spirit proved to be nothing more than a poor Bedlam beggar, who had crept into this deserted hovel for shelter, and with his talk about devils frighted the fool,—one of those poor lunatics who are either mad, or feign to be so, the better to

extort charity from the compassionate country-people, who go about the country calling themselves poor Tom and poor Turlygod, saying, "Who gives anything to poor Tom?" sticking pins and nails and sprigs of rosemary into their arms to make them bleed; and with such horrible actions, partly by prayers and partly with lunatic curses, they move or terrify the ignorant country-folks into giving them alms. This poor fellow was such a one; and the king seeing him in so wretched a plight, with nothing but a blanket about his loins to cover his nakedness, could not be persuaded but that the fellow was some father who had given all away to his daughters, and brought himself to that pass: for nothing he thought could bring a man to such wretchedness but the having unkind daughters.

And from this and many such wild speeches which he uttered, the good Caius plainly perceived that he was not in his perfect mind, but that his daughters' ill-usage had really made him go mad. And now the loyalty of this worthy Earl of Kent showed itself in more essential services than he had hitherto found opportunity to perform. For with the assistance of some of the king's attendants who remained loyal, he had the person of his royal master removed at daybreak to the castle of Dover, where his own friends and influence, as Earl of Kent, chiefly lay; and himself embarking for France, hastened to the court of Cordelia, and did there in such moving terms represent the pitiful condition of her royal father, and set out in such lively colours the inhumanity of her sisters, that this good and loving child with many tears besought the king her husband that he would give her leave to embark for England with a sufficient power to subdue these cruel daughters and their husbands, and restore the old king her father to his throne; which being granted she set forth, and with a royal army landed at Dover.

Lear having by some chance escaped from the guardians which the good Earl of Kent had put over him to take care of him in his lunacy, was found by some of Cordelia's train wandering about the fields near Dover, in a pitiable condition, stark mad, and singing aloud to himself, with a crown upon his head which he had made of straw and nettles, and other wild weeds that he had picked up in the corn-fields. By the advice of the physicians, Cordelia, though earnestly desirous of seeing her father, was prevailed upon to put off the meeting, till by sleep and the operation of herbs which they gave him, he should be restored to greater composure. By the aid of these skilful physicians, to whom Cordelia promised all her gold and jewels for the recovery of the old king, Lear was soon in a condition to see his daughter.

A tender sight it was to see the meeting between this father and daughter; to see the struggles between the joy of this poor old king at beholding again his once darling child, and the shame at receiving such filial kindness from her whom he had cast off for so small a fault in his displeasure; both these passions struggling with the remains of his malady, which in his half-crazed brain sometimes made him that he scarce remembered where he was, or who it was that so kindly kissed him and spoke to him: and then he would beg the standers-by not to laugh at him, if he were mistaken in thinking this lady to be his daughter Cordelia! And then to see him fall on his knees to beg pardon of his child; and she, good lady, kneeling all the while to ask a blessing of him, and telling him that it did not become him to kneel, but it was her duty, for she was his child, his true and very child Cordelia! And she kissed him (as she said) to kiss away all her sisters' unkindness, and said that they might be ashamed of themselves, to turn their old kind father with his white beard out into the cold air, when her enemy's dog, though it had bit her (as she prettily expressed it), should have stayed by her fire such a night as that, and warmed himself. And she told her father how she had come from France with purpose to bring him assistance; and he said that she must forget and forgive, for he was old and foolish, and did not know what he did; but that to

be sure she had great cause not to love him, but her sisters had none. And Cordelia said, that she had no cause, no more than they had.

So we will leave this old king in the protection of this dutiful and loving child, where, by the help of sleep and medicine, she and her physicians at length succeeded in winding up the untuned and jarring senses which the cruelty of his other daughters had so violently shaken. Let us return to say a word or two about those cruel daughters.

These monsters of ingratitude, who had been so false to their old father, could not be expected to prove more faithful to their own husbands. They soon grew tired of paying even the appearance of duty and affection, and in an open way showed they had fixed their loves upon another. It happened that the object of their guilty loves was the same. It was Edmund, a natural son of the late Earl of Gloucester, who by his treacheries had succeeded in disinheriting his brother Edgar, the lawful heir, from his earldom, and by his wicked practices was now earl himself; a wicked man, and a fit object for the love of such wicked creatures as Goneril and Regan. It falling out about this time that the Duke of Cornwall, Regan's husband, died, Regan immediately declared her intention of wedding this Earl of Gloucester, which rousing the jealousy of her sister, to whom as well as to Regan this wicked earl had at sundry times professed love, Goneril found means to make away with her sister by poison; but being detected in her practices, and imprisoned by her husband the Duke of Albany for this deed, and for her guilty passion for the earl which had come to his ears, she, in a fit of disappointed love and rage, shortly put an end to her own life. Thus the justice of Heaven at last overtook these wicked daughters.

While the eyes of all men were upon this event, admiring the justice displayed in their deserved deaths, the same eyes were suddenly taken off from this sight to admire at the mysterious ways of the same power in the melancholy fate of the young and virtuous daughter, the lady Cordelia, whose good deeds did seem to deserve a more fortunate conclusion: but it is an awful truth, that innocence and piety are not always successful in this world. The forces which Goneril and Regan had sent out under the command of the bad Earl of Gloucester were victorious, and Cordelia, by the practices of this wicked earl, who did not like that any should stand between him and the throne, ended her life in prison. Thus Heaven took this innocent lady to itself in her young years, after showing her to the world an illustrious example of filial duty. Lear did not long survive this child.

Before he died, the good Earl of Kent, who had still attended his old master's steps from the first of his daughters' ill-usage to this sad period of his decay, tried to make him understand that it was he who had followed him under the name of Caius; but Lear's care-crazed brain at that time could not comprehend how that could be, or how Kent and Caius could be the same person: so Kent thought it needless to trouble him with explanations at such a time;* and Lear soon after expiring, this faithful servant to the king, between age and grief for his old master's vexations, soon followed him to the grave.

How the judgment of Heaven overtook the bad Earl of Gloucester, whose treasons were discovered, and himself slain in single combat with his brother, the lawful earl; and how Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany, who was innocent of the death of Cordelia, and had never encouraged his lady in her wicked proceedings against her father, ascended the throne of Britain after the death of Lear, is needless here to narrate; Lear and his three daughters being dead, whose adventures alone concern our story.

* *Vide suprà*, p. 233.

# MACBETH.

WHEN Duncan the Meek reigned king of Scotland, there lived a great thane, or lord, called Macbeth. This Macbeth was a near kinsman to the king, and in great esteem at court for his valour and conduct in the wars; an example of which he had lately given, in defeating a rebel army assisted by the troops of Norway in terrible numbers.

The two Scottish generals, Macbeth and Banquo, returning victorious from this great battle, their way lay over a blasted heath, where they were stopped by the strange appearance of three figures like women, except that they had beards, and their withered skins and wild attire made them look not like any earthly creatures. Macbeth first addressed them, when they, seemingly offended, laid each one her choppy finger upon her skinny lips, in token of silence; and the first of them saluted Macbeth with the title of thane of Glamis. The general was not a little startled to find himself known by such creatures; but how much more when the second of them followed up that salute by giving him the title of thane of Cawdor, to which honour he had no pretensions; and again the third bid him "All hail! king that shalt be hereafter!" Such a prophetic greeting might well amaze him, who knew that while the king's sons lived he could not hope to succeed to the throne. Then turning to Banquo, they pronounced him, in a sort of riddling terms, to be *lesser than Macbeth, and greater! not so happy, but much happier!* and prophesied that though he should never reign, yet his sons after him should be kings in Scotland. They then turned into air and vanished; by which the generals knew them to be the weird sisters, or witches.

While they stood pondering on the strangeness of this adventure, there arrived certain messengers from the king, who were empowered by him to confer upon Macbeth the dignity of thane of Cawdor. An event so miraculously corresponding with the prediction of the witches astonished Macbeth, and he stood wrapped in amazement, unable to make reply to the messengers; and in that point of time swelling hopes arose in his mind, that the prediction of the third witch might in like manner have its accomplishment, and that he should one day reign king in Scotland.

Turning to Banquo, he said, "Do you not hope that your children shall be kings, when what the witches promised to me has so wonderfully come to pass?" "That hope," answered the general, "might enkindle you to aim at the throne; but oftentimes these ministers of darkness tell us truths in little things, to betray us into deeds of greatest consequence."

But the wicked suggestions of the witches had sunk too deep into the mind of Macbeth to allow him to attend to the warnings of the good Banquo. From that time he bent all his thoughts how to compass the throne of Scotland.

Macbeth had a wife, to whom he communicated the strange prediction of the weird sisters, and its partial accomplishment. She was a bad ambitious woman, and so as her husband and herself could arrive at greatness, she cared not much by what means. She spurred on the reluctant purpose of Macbeth, who felt compunction at the thoughts of blood, and did not cease to represent the murder of the king as a step absolutely necessary to the fulfilment of the flattering prophecy.

It happened at this time that the king, who out of his royal condescension

would oftentimes visit his principal nobility upon gracious terms, came to Macbeth's house, attended by his two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, and a numerous train of thanes and attendants, the more to honour Macbeth for the triumphal success of his wars.

The castle of Macbeth was pleasantly situated, and the air about it was sweet and wholesome, which appeared by the nests which the martlet, or swallow, had built under all the jutting friezes and buttresses of the building, wherever it found a place of advantage; for where those birds most breed and haunt, the air is observed to be delicate. The king entered well pleased with the place, and not less so with the attentions and respect of his honoured hostess, lady Macbeth, who had the art of covering treacherous purposes with smiles; and could look like the innocent flower, while she was indeed the serpent under it.

The king, being tired with his journey, went early to bed, and in his state-room two grooms of his chamber (as was the custom) slept beside him. He had been unusually pleased with his reception, and had made presents before he retired to his principal officers; and, among the rest, had sent a rich diamond to lady Macbeth, greeting her by the name of his most kind hostess.

Now was the middle of night, when over half the world nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse men's minds asleep, and none but the wolf and the murderer is abroad. This was the time when lady Macbeth waked to plot the murder of the king. She would not have undertaken a deed so abhorrent to her sex, but that she feared her husband's nature, that it was too full of the milk of human kindness to do a contrived murder. She knew him to be ambitious, but withal to be scrupulous, and not yet prepared for that height of crime which commonly in the end accompanies inordinate ambition. She had won him to consent to the murder, but she doubted his resolution; and she feared that the natural tenderness of his disposition (more humane than her own) would come between, and defeat the purpose. So with her own hands armed with a dagger, she approached the king's bed; having taken care to ply the grooms of his chamber so with wine that they slept intoxicated, and careless of their charge. There lay Duncan, in a sound sleep after the fatigues of his journey, and as she viewed him earnestly, there was something in his face, as he slept, which resembled her own father; and she had not the courage to proceed.

She returned to confer with her husband. His resolution had begun to stagger. He considered that there were strong reasons against the deed. In the first place, he was not only a subject, but a near kinsman to the king; and he had been his host and entertainer that day, whose duty, by the laws of hospitality, it was to shut the door against his murderers, not bear the knife himself. Then he considered how just and merciful a king this Duncan had been, how clear of offence to his subjects, how loving to his nobility, and in particular to him; that such kings are the peculiar care of Heaven, and their subjects doubly bound to revenge their deaths. Besides, by the favours of the king, Macbeth stood high in the opinion of all sorts of men, and how would those honours be stained by the reputation of so foul a murder!

In these conflicts of the mind lady Macbeth found her husband, inclining to the better part, and resolving to proceed no further. But she being a bad ambitious woman, and not easily shaken from her purpose, began to pour in at his ears words which infused a portion of her own spirit into his mind, assigning reason upon reason why he should not shrink from what he had undertaken; how easy the deed was; how soon it would be over; and how the action of one short night would give to all their nights and days to come sovereign sway and royalty! Then she threw contempt on his change of purpose, and accused him of fickleness and cowardice; and declared that she had given suck, and knew how tender it was to love the babe that milked her; but she

would, while it was smiling in her face, have plucked it from her breast, and dashed its brains out, if she had so sworn to do it, as he had sworn to perform that murder. Then she added, how practicable it was to lay the guilt of the deed upon the drunken sleepy grooms. And with the valour of her tongue she so chastised his sluggish resolutions, that he once more summoned up courage to the bloody business.

So, taking the dagger in his hand, he softly stole in the dark to the room where Duncan lay; and as he went, he thought he saw another dagger in the air, with the handle towards him, and on the blade and at the point of it drops of blood; but when he tried to grasp at it, it was nothing but air, a mere phantasm proceeding from his own hot and oppressed brain and the business he had in hand.

Getting rid of this fear, he entered the king's room, whom he despatched with one stroke of his dagger. Just as he had done the murder, one of the grooms, who slept in the chamber, laughed in his sleep, and the other cried, "Murder!" which woke them both; but they said a short prayer; one of them said, "God bless us!" and the other answered "Amen;" and addressed themselves to sleep again. Macbeth, who stood listening to them, tried to say "Amen," when the fellow said, "God bless us!" but, though he had most need of a blessing, the word stuck in his throat, and he could not pronounce it.

Again he thought he heard a voice which cried, "Sleep no more: Macbeth doth murder sleep, the innocent sleep, that nourishes life." Still it cried, "Sleep no more," to all the house. "Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more."

With such horrible imaginations Macbeth returned to his listening wife, who began to think he had failed of his purpose, and that the deed was somehow frustrated. He came in so distracted a state, that she reproached him with his want of firmness, and sent him to wash his hands of the blood which stained them, while she took his dagger, with purpose to stain the cheeks of the grooms with blood, to make it seem their guilt.

Morning came, and with it the discovery of the murder, which could not be concealed; and though Macbeth and his lady made great show of grief, and the proofs against the grooms (the dagger being produced against them and their faces smeared with blood) were sufficiently strong, yet the entire suspicion fell upon Macbeth, whose inducements to such a deed were so much more forcible than such poor silly grooms could be supposed to have; and Duncan's two sons fled. Malcolm, the eldest, sought for refuge in the English court; and the youngest, Donalbain, made his escape to Ireland.

The king's sons, who should have succeeded him, having thus vacated the throne, Macbeth as next heir was crowned king, and thus the prediction of the weird sisters was literally accomplished.

Though placed so high, Macbeth and his queen could not forget the prophecy of the weird sisters, that, though Macbeth should be king, yet not his children, but the children of Banquo, should be kings after him. The thought of this, and that they had defiled their hands with blood, and done so great crimes, only to place the posterity of Banquo upon the throne, so rankled within them, that they determined to put to death both Banquo and his son, to make void the predictions of the weird sisters, which in their own case had been so remarkably brought to pass.

For this purpose they made a great supper, to which they invited all the chief thanes; and, among the rest, with marks of particular respect, Banquo and his son Fleance were invited. The way by which Banquo was to pass to the palace at night was beset by murderers appointed by Macbeth, who stabbed Banquo; but in the scuffle Fleance escaped. From that Fleance descended a race of monarchs who afterwards filled the Scottish throne, ending

with James the Sixth of Scotland and the First of England, under whom the two crowns of England and Scotland were united.

At supper the queen, whose manners were in the highest degree affable and royal, played the hostess with a gracefulness and attention which conciliated every one present, and Macbeth discoursed freely with his thanes and nobles, saying, that all that was honourable in the country was under his roof, if he had but his good friend Banquo present, whom yet he hoped he should rather have to chide for neglect, than to lament for any mischance. Just at these words the ghost of Banquo, whom he had caused to be murdered, entered the room, and placed himself on the chair which Macbeth was about to occupy. Though Macbeth was a bold man, and one that could have faced the devil without trembling, at this horrible sight his cheeks turned white with fear, and he stood quite unmanned with his eyes fixed upon the ghost. His queen and all the nobles, who saw nothing, but perceived him gazing (as they thought) upon an empty chair, took it for a fit of distraction: and she reproached him, whispering that it was but the same fancy which had made him see the dagger in the air, when he was about to kill Duncan. But Macbeth continued to see the ghost, and gave no heed to all they could say, while he addressed it with distracted words, yet so significant, that his queen, fearing the dreadful secret would be disclosed, in great haste dismissed the guests, excusing the infirmity of Macbeth as a disorder he was often troubled with.

To such dreadful fancies Macbeth was subject. His queen and he had their sleeps afflicted with terrible dreams, and the blood of Banquo troubled them not more than the escape of Fleance, whom now they looked upon as father to a line of kings, who should keep their posterity out of the throne. With these miserable thoughts they found no peace, and Macbeth determined once more to seek out the weird sisters, and know from them the worst.

He sought them in a cave upon the heath, where they, who knew by foresight of his coming, were engaged in preparing their dreadful charms, by which they conjured up infernal spirits to reveal to them futurity. Their horrid ingredients were toads, bats, and serpents, the eye of a newt, and the tongue of a dog, the leg of a lizard, and the wing of the night-owl, the scale of a dragon, the tooth of a wolf, the maw of the ravenous salt-sea shark, the mummy of a witch, the root of the poisonous hemlock (this to have effect must be digged in the dark), the gall of a goat, and the liver of a Jew, with slips of the yew tree that roots itself in graves, and the finger of a dead child; all these were set on to boil in a great kettle, or cauldron, which, as fast as it grew too hot, was cooled with a baboon's blood: to these they poured in the blood of a sow that had eaten her young, and they threw into the flame the grease that had sweaten from a murderer's gibbet. By these charms they bound the infernal spirits to answer their questions.

It was demanded of Macbeth, whether he would have his doubts resolved by them, or by their masters, the spirits. He, nothing daunted by the dreadful ceremonies which he saw, boldly answered, "Where are they? let me see them." And they called the spirits, which were three. And the first arose in the likeness of an armed head, and he called Macbeth by name, and bid him beware of the thane of Fife; for which caution Macbeth thanked him; for Macbeth had entertained a jealousy of Macduff, the thane of Fife.

And the second spirit arose in the likeness of a bloody child, and he called Macbeth by name, and bid him have no fear, but laugh to scorn the power of man, for none of woman born should have power to hurt him: and he advised him to be bloody, bold, and resolute. "Then live, Macduff!" cried the king; "what need I fear of thee? but yet I will make assurance doubly sure. Thou shalt not live; that I may tell pale-hearted Fear it lies, and sleep in spite of thunder."

That spirit being dismissed, a third arose in the form of a child crowned,

with a tree in his hand. He called Macbeth by name, and comforted him against conspiracies, saying that he should never be vanquished until the wood of Birnam to Dunsinane Hill should come against him. "Sweet bodements, good!" cried Macbeth; "who can unfix the forest, and move it from its earth-bound roots? I see I shall live the usual period of man's life, and not be cut off by violent death. But my heart throbs to know one thing. Tell me, if your art can tell so much, if Banquo's issue shall ever reign in this kingdom?" Here the cauldron sunk into the ground, and a noise of music was heard, and eight shadows, like kings, passed by Macbeth, and Banquo last, who bore a glass which showed the figures of many more, and Banquo all bloody smiled upon Macbeth, and pointed to them; by which Macbeth knew that these were the posterity of Banquo, who should reign after him in Scotland; and the witches, with a sound of soft music, and with dancing, making a show of duty and welcome to Macbeth, vanished. And from this time the thoughts of Macbeth were all bloody and dreadful.

The first thing he heard when he got out of the witches' cave was that Macduff, thane of Fife, had fled to England, to join the army which was forming against him under Malcolm, the eldest son of the late king, with intent to displace Macbeth, and set Malcolm, the right heir, upon the throne. Macbeth, stung with rage, set upon the castle of Macduff and put his wife and children, whom the thane had left behind, to the sword, and extended the slaughter to all who claimed the least relationship to Macduff.

These and such-like deeds alienated the minds of all his chief nobility from him. Such as could, fled to join with Malcolm and Macduff, who were now approaching with a powerful army which they had raised in England; and the rest secretly wished success to their arms, though for fear of Macbeth they could take no active part. His recruits went on slowly. Everybody hated the tyrant, nobody loved or honoured him; but all suspected him, and he began to envy the condition of Duncan, whom he had murdered, who slept soundly in his grave, against whom treason had done its worst: steel nor poison, domestic malice nor foreign levies, could hurt him any longer.

While these things were acting, the queen, who had been the sole partner in his wickedness, in whose bosom he could sometimes seek a momentary repose from those terrible dreams which afflicted them both nightly, died, it is supposed by her own hands, unable to bear the remorse of guilt, and public hate; by which event he was left alone, without a soul to love or care for him, or a friend to whom he could confide his wicked purposes.

He grew careless of life, and wished for death; but the near approach of Malcolm's army roused in him what remained of his ancient courage, and he determined to die (as he expressed it) "with armour on his back." Besides this, the hollow promises of the witches had filled him with false confidence, and he remembered the sayings of the spirits, that none of women born was to hurt him, and that he was never to be vanquished till Birnam wood should come to Dunsinane, which he thought could never be. So he shut himself up in his castle, whose impregnable strength was such as defied a siege: here he sullenly waited the approach of Malcolm. When, upon a day, there came a messenger to him, pale and shaking with fear, almost unable to report that which he had seen; for he averred, that as he stood upon his watch on the hill, he looked towards Birnam, and to his thinking the wood began to move! "Liar and slave!" cried Macbeth; "if thou speakest false, thou shalt hang alive upon the next tree, till famine end thee. If thy tale be true, I care not if thou dost as much by me:" for Macbeth now began to faint in resolution, and to doubt the equivocal speeches of the spirits. He was not to fear till Birnam wood should come to Dunsinane; and now a wood did move! "However," said he, "if this which he avouches be true, let us arm and out. There is no flying hence, nor staying here. I begin to be weary of the sun, and wish

my life at an end." With these desperate speeches he sallied forth upon the besiegers, who had now come up to the castle.

The strange appearance which had given the messenger an idea of a wood moving is easily solved. When the besieging army marched through the wood of Birnam, Malcolm, like a skilful general, instructed his soldiers to hew down every one a bough, and bear it before him, by way of concealing the true numbers of his host. This marching of the soldiers with boughs had at a distance the appearance which had frightened the messenger. Thus were the words of the spirits brought to pass, in a sense different from that in which Macbeth had understood them, and one great hold of his confidence was gone.

And now a severe skirmishing took place, in which Macbeth, though feebly supported by those who called themselves his friends, but in reality hated the tyrant and inclined to the party of Malcolm and Macduff, yet fought with the extreme of rage and valour, cutting to pieces all who were opposed to him, till he came to where Macduff was fighting. Seeing Macduff, and remembering the caution of the spirit who had counselled him to avoid Macduff above all men, he would have turned, but Macduff, who had been seeking him through the whole fight, opposed his turning, and a fierce contest ensued; Macduff giving him many foul reproaches for the murder of his wife and children. Macbeth, whose soul was charged enough with the blood of that family already, would still have declined the combat; but Macduff still urged him to it, calling him tyrant, murderer, hell-hound, and villain.

Then Macbeth remembered the words of the spirit, how none of woman born should hurt him; and smiling confidently, he said to Macduff, "Thou losest thy labour, Macduff. As easily thou mayest impress the air with thy sword, as make me vulnerable. I bear a charmed life, which must not yield to one of woman born."

"Despair thy charm," said Macduff, "and let that lying spirit whom thou hast served, tell thee, that Macduff was never born of woman, never as the ordinary manner of men is to be born, but was untimely taken from his mother."

"Accursed be the tongue which tells me so," said the trembling Macbeth, who felt his last hold of confidence give way; "and let never man in future believe the lying equivocations of witches and juggling spirits, who deceive us in words which have double senses, and while they keep their promise literally, disappoint our hopes with a different meaning. I will not fight with thee."

"Then live!" said the scornful Macduff; "we will have a show of thee, as men show monsters, and a painted board, on which shall be written, 'Here men may see the tyrant!'"

"Never," said Macbeth, whose courage returned with despair; "I will not live to kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet, and to be baited with the curses of the rabble. Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane, and thou opposed to me, who was never born of woman, yet will I try the last." With these frantic words he threw himself upon Macduff, who, after a severe struggle, in the end overcame him, and cutting off his head, made a present of it to the young and lawful king, Malcolm; who took upon him the government which, by the machinations of the usurper, he had so long been deprived of, and ascended the throne of Duncan the Meek, amid the acclamations of the nobles and the people.

# TIMON OF ATHENS.

TIMON, a lord of Athens, in the enjoyment of a princely fortune, affected a humour of liberality which knew no limits. His almost infinite wealth could not flow in so fast, but he poured it out faster upon all sorts and degrees of people. Not the poor only tasted of his bounty, but great lords did not disdain to rank themselves among his dependants and followers. His table was resorted to by all the luxurious feasters, and his house was open to all comers and goers at Athens. His large wealth combined with his free and prodigal nature to subdue all hearts to his love; men of all minds and dispositions tendered their services to lord Timon, from the glass-faced flatterer, whose face reflects as in a mirror the present humour of his patron, to the rough and unbending cynic, who, affecting a contempt of men's persons and an indifference to worldly things, yet could not stand out against the gracious manners and munificent soul of lord Timon, but would come (against his nature) to partake of his royal entertainments, and return most rich in his own estimation if he had received a nod or a salutation from Timon.

If a poet had composed a work which wanted a recommendatory introduction to the world, he had no more to do but to dedicate it to lord Timon, and the poem was sure of a sale, besides a present purse from the patron, and daily access to his house and table. If a painter had a picture to dispose of, he had only to take it to lord Timon, and pretend to consult his taste as to the merits of it; nothing more was wanting to persuade the liberal-hearted lord to buy it. If a jeweller had a stone of price, or a mercer rich costly stuffs, which for their costliness lay upon his hands, lord Timon's house was a ready mart always open, where they might get off their wares or their jewellery at any price, and the good-natured lord would thank them into the bargain, as if they had done him a piece of courtesy in letting him have the refusal of such precious commodities. So that by this means his house was thronged with superfluous purchases, of no use but to swell uneasy and ostentatious pomp; and his person was still more inconveniently beset with a crowd of these idle visitors, lying poets, painters, sharking tradesmen, lords, ladies, needy courtiers, and expectants, who continually filled his lobbies, raining their fulsome flatteries in whispers in his ears, sacrificing to him with adulation as to a god, making sacred the very stirrup by which he mounted his horse, and seeming as though they drank the free air but through his permission and bounty.

Some of these daily dependants were young men of birth, who (their means not answering to their extravagance) had been put in prison by creditors, and redeemed thence by lord Timon; these young prodigals thenceforward fastened upon his lordship, as if by common sympathy he were necessarily endeared to all such spendthrifts and loose livers, who, not being able to follow him in his wealth, found it easier to copy him in prodigality and copious spending of what was not their own. One of these flesh-flies was Ventidius, for whose debts, unjustly contracted, Timon but lately had paid down the sum of five talents.

But among this confluence, this great flood of visitors, none were more conspicuous than the makers of presents and givers of gifts. It was fortunate for these men if Timon took a fancy to a dog or a horse, or any piece of cheap furniture, which was theirs. The thing so praised, whatever it was, was sure

to be sent the next morning with the compliments of the giver for lord Timon's acceptance, and apologies for the unworthiness of the gift; and this dog or horse, or whatever it might be, did not fail to produce from Timon's bounty—who would not be outdone in gifts—perhaps twenty dogs or horses; certainly presents of far richer worth, as these pretended donors knew well enough, and that their false presents were but the putting out of so much money at a large and speedy interest. In this way lord Lucius had lately sent to Timon a present of four milk-white horses, trapped in silver, which this cunning lord had observed Timon upon some occasion to commend; and another lord, Lucullus, had bestowed upon him, in the same pretended way of free gift, a brace of greyhounds, whose make and fleetness Timon had been heard to admire: these presents the easy-hearted lord accepted without suspicion of the dishonest views of the presenters; and the givers of course were rewarded with some rich return—a diamond or some jewel of twenty times the value of their false and mercenary donation.

Sometimes these creatures would go to work in a more direct way, and with gross and palpable artifice, which yet the credulous Timon was too blind to see, would affect to admire and praise something that Timon possessed, a bargain that he had bought, or some late purchase, which was sure to draw from this yielding and soft-hearted lord a gift of the thing commended, for no service in the world done for it but the easy expense of a little cheap and obvious flattery. In this way Timon but the other day had given to one of these mean lords the bay courser which he himself rode upon, because his lordship had been pleased to say that it was a handsome beast, and went well; and Timon knew that no man ever justly praised what he did not wish to possess. For lord Timon weighed his friends' affection with his own, and so fond was he of bestowing, that he could have dealt kingdoms to these supposed friends, and never have been weary.

Not that Timon's wealth all went to enrich these wicked flatterers; he could do noble and praiseworthy actions: and when a servant of his once loved the daughter of a rich Athenian, but could not hope to obtain her by reason that in wealth and rank the maid was so far above him, lord Timon freely bestowed upon his servant three Athenian talents, to make his fortune equal with the dowry which the father of the young maid demanded of him who should be her husband. But, for the most part, knaves and parasites had the command of his fortune—false friends whom he did not know to be such; but, because they flocked around his person, he thought they must needs love him; and, because they smiled and flattered him, he thought surely that his conduct was approved by all the wise and good. And when he was feasting in the midst of all these flatterers and mock friends—when they were eating him up and draining his fortunes dry with large draughts of richest wines drunk to his health and prosperity—he could not perceive the difference of a friend from a flatterer; but to his deluded eyes (made proud with the sight) it seemed a precious comfort to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes (though it was his own fortune which paid all the cost), and with joy they would run over at the spectacle of such, as it appeared to him, truly festive and fraternal meeting.

But while he thus outwent the very heart of kindness, and poured out his bounty, as if Plutus the god of gold had been but his steward; while thus he proceeded without care or stop, so senseless of expense that he would neither inquire how he could maintain it, nor cease his wild flow of riot; his riches, which were not infinite, must needs melt away before a prodigality which knew no limits. But who should tell him so? his flatterers? they had an interest in shutting his eyes. In vain did his honest steward Flavius try to represent to him his condition, laying his accounts before him, begging of him, praying of him, with an importunity that on any other occasion would have been unman-

nerly in a servant, beseeching him with tears to look into the state of his affairs. Timon would still put him off, and turn the discourse to something else; for nothing is so deaf to remonstrance as riches turned to poverty, nothing is so unwilling to believe its situation, nothing so incredulous to its own true state, and hard to give credit to a reverse. Often had this good steward, this honest creature, when all the rooms of Timon's great house have been choked up with riotous feeders at his master's cost, when the floors have wept with drunken spilling of wine, and every apartment had blazed with lights and resounded with music and feasting; often had he retired by himself to some solitary spot, and wept faster than the wine ran from the wasteful casks within, to see the mad bounty of his lord, and to think, when the means were gone which bought him praises from all sorts of people, how quickly the breath would be gone of which the praise was made; praises won in feasting would be lost in fasting, and at one cloud of winter-showers these flies would disappear.

But now the time was come that Timon could shut his ears no longer to the representations of this faithful steward. Money must be had; and when he ordered Flavius to sell some of his land for that purpose, Flavius informed him, what he had in vain endeavoured at several times before to make him listen to, that most of his land was already sold or forfeited; and that all he possessed at present was not enough to pay the one half of what he owed. Struck with wonder at this representation, Timon hastily replied, "My lands extended from Athens to Lacedæmon." "O, my good lord," said Flavius, "the world is but a world, and has bounds; were it all yours to give it in a breath, how quickly were it gone!"

Timon consoled himself that no villanous bounty had yet come from him; that if he had given his wealth away unwisely, it had not been bestowed to feed his vices, but to cherish his friends; and he bade the kind-hearted steward (who was weeping) to take comfort in the assurance that his master could never lack means while he had so many noble friends: and this infatuated lord persuaded himself that he had nothing to do but to send and borrow, to use every man's fortune (that had ever tasted his bounty), in this extremity, as freely as his own. Then with a cheerful look, as if confident of the trial, he severally despatched messengers to lord Lucius, to lords Lucullus and Sempronius, men upon whom he had lavished his gifts in past times without measure or moderation; and to Ventidius, whom he had lately released out of prison by paying his debts, and who by the death of his father was now come into the possession of an ample fortune, and well enabled to requite Timon's courtesy; to request of Ventidius the return of those five talents which he had paid for him, and of each of those noble lords the loan of fifty talents; nothing doubting that their gratitude would supply his wants (if he needed it) to the amount of five hundred times fifty talents.

Lucullus was the first applied to. This mean lord had been dreaming overnight of a silver bason and cup, and when Timon's servant was announced, his sordid mind suggested to him that this was surely a making out of his dream, and that Timon had sent him such a present: but when he understood the truth of the matter, and that Timon wanted money, the quality of his faint and watery friendship showed itself; for, with many protestations, he vowed to the servant that he had long foreseen the ruin of his master's affairs, and many a time had he come to dinner to tell him of it, and had come again to supper to try to persuade him to spend less, but he would take no counsel nor warning by his coming; and true it was that he had been a constant attender (as he said) at Timon's feasts, as he had in greater things tasted his bounty; but that he ever came with that intent, or gave good counsel or reproof to Timon, was a base unworthy lie, which he suitably followed up with meanly offering the servant a bribe to go home to his master and tell him that he had not found Lucullus at home.

As little success had the messenger who was sent to lord Lucius. This lying lord, who was full of Timon's meat, and enriched almost to bursting with Timon's costly presents, when he found the wind changed, and the fountain of so much bounty suddenly stopped, at first could hardly believe it; but, on its being confirmed, he affected great regret that he should not have it in his power to serve lord Timon, for unfortunately (which was a base falsehood) he had made a great purchase the day before, which had quite disfurnished him of the means at present; the more beast he, he called himself, to put it out of his power to serve so good a friend; and he counted it one of his greatest afflictions that his ability should fail him to pleasure such an honourable gentleman.

Who can call any man friend that dips in the same dish with him? Just of this metal is every flatterer. In the recollection of everybody Timon had been a father to this Lucius, had kept up his credit with his purse; Timon's money had gone to pay the wages of his servants, to pay the hire of the labourers who had sweat to build the fine houses which Lucius's pride had made necessary to him: yet, oh! the monster which man makes himself when he proves ungrateful! this Lucius now denied to Timon a sum which, in respect of what Timon had bestowed on him, was less than charitable men afford to beggars.

Sempronius, and every one of these mercenary lords to whom Timon applied in their turn, returned the same evasive answer or direct denial: even Ventidius, the redeemed and now rich Ventidius, refused to assist him with the loan of those five talents which Timon had not lent, but generously given him in his distress.

Now was Timon as much avoided in his poverty as he had been courted and resorted to in his riches. Now the same tongues which had been loudest in his praises, extolling him as bountiful, liberal, and open-handed, were not ashamed to censure that very bounty as folly, that liberality as profuseness, though it had shown itself folly in nothing so truly as in the selection of such unworthy creatures as themselves for its objects. Now was Timon's princely mansion forsaken, and become a shunned and hated place, a place for men to pass by, not a place as formerly where every passenger must stop and taste of his wine and good cheer; now, instead of being thronged with feasting and tumultuous guests, it was beset with impatient and clamorous creditors, usurers, extortioners, fierce and intolerable in their demands, pleading bonds, interest, mortgages, iron-hearted men that would take no denial nor putting off, that Timon's house was now his jail, which he could not pass, nor go in nor out for them; one demanding his due of fifty talents, another bringing in a bill of five thousand crowns, which if he would tell out his blood by drops, and pay them so, he had not enough in his body to discharge, drop by drop.

In this desperate and irremediable state (as it seemed) of his affairs, the eyes of all men were suddenly surprised at a new and incredible lustre which this setting sun put forth. Once more lord Timon proclaimed a feast, to which he invited his accustomed guests, lords, ladies, all that was great or fashionable in Athens. Lords Lucius and Lucullus came, Ventidius, Sempronius, and the rest. Who more sorry now than these fawning wretches, when they found (as they thought) that lord Timon's poverty was all pretence, and had been only put on to make trial of their loves, to think that they should not have seen through the artifice at the time, and have had the cheap credit of obliging his lordship? yet who more glad to find the fountain of that noble bounty, which they had thought dried up, still fresh and running? They came dissembling, protesting, expressing deepest sorrow and shame, that when his lordship sent to them, they should have been so unfortunate as to want the present means to oblige so honourable a friend. But Timon begged them not to give such trifles a thought, for he had altogether forgotten it. And these base fawning lords, though they had denied him money in his adversity, yet

could not refuse their presence at this new blaze of his returning prosperity. For the swallow follows not summer more willingly than men of these dispositions follow the good fortunes of the great, nor more willingly leaves winter than these shrink from the first appearance of a reverse; such summer-birds are men. But now with music and state the banquet of smoking dishes was served up; and when the guests had a little done admiring whence the bankrupt Timon could find means to furnish so costly a feast, some doubting whether the scene which they saw was real, as scarce trusting their own eyes; at a signal given, the dishes were uncovered, and Timon's drift appeared: instead of those varieties and far-fetched dainties which they expected, that Timon's epicurean table in past times had so liberally presented, now appeared under the covers of these dishes a preparation more suitable to Timon's poverty, nothing but a little smoke and lukewarm water, fit feast for this knot of mouth-friends, whose professions were indeed smoke, and their hearts lukewarm and slippery as the water with which Timon welcomed his astonished guests, bidding them "Uncover, dogs, and lap;" and before they could recover their surprise, sprinkling it in their faces, that they might have enough, and throwing dishes and all after them, who now ran huddling out, lords, ladies, with their caps snatched up in haste, a splendid confusion, Timon pursuing them, still calling them what they were, "smooth smiling parasites, destroyers under the mask of courtesy, affable wolves, meek bears, fools of fortune, feast-friends, time-flies." They, crowding out to avoid him, left the house more willingly than they had entered it; some losing their gowns and caps, and some their jewels in the hurry, all glad to escape out of the presence of such a mad lord, and the ridicule of his mock banquet.

This was the last feast which ever Timon made, and in it he took farewell of Athens and the society of men; for, after that, he betook himself to the woods, turning his back upon the hated city and upon all mankind, wishing the walls of that detestable city might sink, and the houses fall upon their owners, wishing all plagues which infest humanity, war, outrage, poverty, diseases, might fasten upon its inhabitants, praying the just gods to confound all Athenians, both young and old, high and low; so wishing, he went to the woods, where he said he should find the unkindest beast much kinder than mankind. He stripped himself naked, that he might retain no fashion of a man, and dug a cave to live in, and lived solitary in the manner of a beast, eating the wild roots, and drinking water, flying from the face of his kind, and choosing rather to herd with wild beasts, as more harmless and friendly than man.

What a change from lord Timon the rich, lord Timon the delight of mankind, to Timon the naked, Timon the man-hater! Where were his flatterers now? Where were his attendants and retinue? Would the bleak air, that boisterous servitor, be his chamberlain, to put his shirt on warm? Would those stiff trees, that had outlived the eagle, turn young and airy pages to him, to skip on his errands when he bade them? Would the cold brook, when it was iced with winter, administer to him his warm broths and caudles when sick of an over-night's surfeit? Or would the creatures that lived in those wild woods come and lick his hand and flatter him?

Here on a day, when he was digging for roots, his poor sustenance, his spade struck against something heavy, which proved to be gold, a great heap which some miser had probably buried in a time of alarm, thinking to have come again and taken it from its prison, but died before the opportunity had arrived, without making any man privy to the concealment; so it lay, doing neither good nor harm, in the bowels of the earth, its mother, as if it had never come from thence, till the accidental striking of Timon's spade against it once more brought it to light.

Here was a mass of treasure, which, if Timon had retained his old mind, was enough to have purchased him friends and flatterers again; but Timon

was sick of the false world, and the sight of gold was poisonous to his eyes; and he would have restored it to the earth, but that, thinking of the infinite calamities which by means of gold happen to mankind, how the lucre of it causes robberies, oppression, injustice, briberies, violence, and murder, among men, he had a pleasure in imagining (such a rooted hatred did he bear to his species), that out of this heap, which in digging he had discovered, might arise some mischief to plague mankind. And some soldiers passing through the woods near to his cave at that instant, which proved to be a part of the troops of the Athenian captain Alcibiades, who upon some disgust taken against the senators of Athens (the Athenians were ever noted to be a thankless and ungrateful people, giving disgust to their generals and best friends) was marching at the head of the same triumphant army which he had formerly headed in their defence, to war against them: Timon, who liked their business well, bestowed upon their captain the gold to pay his soldiers, requiring no other service from him than that he should with his conquering army lay Athens level with the ground, and burn, slay, kill all her inhabitants; not sparing the old men for their white beards, for (he said) they were usurers, nor the young children for their seeming innocent smiles, for those (he said) would live, if they grew up, to be traitors; but to steel his eyes and ears against any sights or sounds that might awaken compassion; and not to let the cries of virgins, babes, or mothers hinder him from making one universal massacre of the city, but to confound them all in his conquest; and when he had conquered, he prayed that the gods would confound him also, the conqueror: so thoroughly did Timon hate Athens, Athenians, and all mankind.

While he lived in this forlorn state, leading a life more brutal than human, he was suddenly surprised one day with the appearance of a man standing in an admiring posture at the door of his cave. It was Flavius, the honest steward, whom love and zealous affection to his master had led to seek him out at his wretched dwelling, and to offer his services; and the first sight of his master, the once noble Timon, in that abject condition, naked as he was born, living in the manner of a beast among beasts, looking like his own sad ruins and a monument of decay, so affected this good servant, that he stood speechless, wrapped up in horror, and confounded. And when he found utterance at last to his words, they were so choked with tears, that Timon had much ado to know him again, or to make out who it was that had come (so contrary to the experience he had had of mankind) to offer him service in extremity. And being in the form and shape of a man, he suspected him for a traitor, and his tears for false; but the good servant by so many tokens confirmed the truth of his fidelity, and made it clear that nothing but love and zealous duty to his once dear master had brought him there, that Timon was forced to confess that the world contained one honest man; yet, being in the shape and form of a man, he could not look upon this man's face without abhorrence, or hear words uttered from his man's lips without loathing; and this singly honest man was forced to depart because he was a man, and because, with a heart more gentle and compassionate than is usual to man, he bore man's detested form and outward feature.

But greater visitants than a poor steward were about to interrupt the savage quiet of Timon's solitude. For now the day was come when the ungrateful lords of Athens sorely repented the injustice which they had done to the noble Timon. For Alcibiades, like an incensed wild boar, was raging at the walls of their city, and with his hot siege threatened to lay fair Athens in the dust. And now the memory of lord Timon's former prowess and military conduct came fresh into their forgetful minds, for Timon had been their general in past times, and was a valiant and expert soldier, who alone of all the Athenians was deemed able to cope with a besieging army such as then threatened them, or to drive back the furious approaches of Alcibiades.

A deputation of the senators was chosen in this emergency to wait upon Timon. To him they come in their extremity, to whom, when he was in extremity, they had shown but small regard; as if they presumed upon his gratitude whom they had disobliged, and had derived a claim to his courtesy from their own most discourteous and unpiteous treatment.

Now they earnestly beseech him, implore him with tears, to return and save that city from which their ingratitude had so lately driven him; now they offer him riches, power, dignities, satisfaction for past injuries, and public honours, and the public love; their persons, lives, and fortunes to be at his disposal, if he will but come back and save them. But Timon the naked, Timon the man-hater, was no longer lord Timon, the lord of bounty, the flower of valour, their defence in war, their ornament in peace. If Alcibiades killed his countrymen, Timon cared not. If he sacked fair Athens, and slew her old men and her infants, Timon would rejoice. So he told them; and that there was not a knife in the unruly camp which he did not prize above the reverendest throat in Athens.

This was all the answer he vouchsafed to the weeping, disappointed senators; only at parting he bade them commend him to his countrymen, and tell them, that to ease them of their griefs and anxieties, and to prevent the consequences of fierce Alcibiades' wrath, there was yet a way left, which he would teach them, for he had yet so much affection left for his dear countrymen as to be willing to do them a kindness before his death. These words a little revived the senators, who hoped that his kindness for their city was returning. Then Timon told them that he had a tree, which grew near his cave, which he should shortly have occasion to cut down, and he invited all his friends in Athens, high or low, of what degree soever, who wished to shun affliction, to come and take a taste of his tree before be cut it down; meaning, that they might come and hang themselves on it, and escape affliction that way.

And this was the last courtesy, of all his noble bounties, which Timon showed to mankind, and this the last sight of him which his countrymen had: for not many days after, a poor soldier, passing by the sea-beach, which was at a little distance from the woods which Timon frequented, found a tomb on the verge of the sea, with an inscription upon it, purporting that it was the grave of Timon the man-hater, who "while he lived, did hate all living men, and dying wished a plague might consume all caitiffs left!"

Whether he finished his life by violence, or whether mere distaste of life and the loathing he had for mankind brought Timon to his conclusion, was not clear, yet all men admired the fitness of his epitaph, and the consistency of his end; dying, as he had lived, a hater of mankind: and some there were who fancied a conceit in the very choice which he made of the sea-beach for his place of burial, where the vast sea might weep for ever upon his grave, as in contempt of the transient and shallow tears of hypocritical and deceitful mankind.

# ROMEO AND JULIET.

THE two chief families in Verona were the rich Capulets and the Montagues. There had been an old quarrel between these families, which was grown to such a height, and so deadly was the enmity between them, that it extended to the remotest kindred, to the followers and retainers of both sides, insomuch that

a servant of the house of Montague could not meet a servant of the house of Capulet, nor a Capulet encounter with a Montague by chance, but fierce words and sometimes bloodshed ensued; and frequent were the brawls from such accidental meetings, which disturbed the happy quiet of Verona's streets.

Old Lord Capulet made a great supper, to which many fair ladies and many noble guests were invited. All the admired beauties of Verona were present, and all comers were made welcome if they were not of the house of Montague. At this feast of Capulets, Rosaline, beloved of Romeo, son to the old lord Montague, was present; and though it was dangerous for a Montague to be seen in this assembly, yet Benvolio, a friend of Romeo, persuaded the young lord to go to this assembly in the disguise of a mask, that he might see his Rosaline, and seeing her, compare her with some choice beauties of Verona, who (he said) would make him think his swan a crow. Romeo had small faith in Benvolio's words; nevertheless, for the love of Rosaline, he was persuaded to go. For Romeo was a sincere and passionate lover, and one that lost his sleep for love, and fled society to be alone, thinking on Rosaline, who disdained him, and never requited his love with the least show of courtesy or affection; and Benvolio wished to cure his friend of this love by showing him diversity of ladies and company. To this feast of Capulets then young Romeo with Benvolio and their friend Mercutio went masked. Old Capulet bid them welcome, and told them that ladies who had their toes unplagued with corns would dance with them. And the old man was light-hearted and merry, and said that he had worn a mask when he was young, and could have told a whispering tale in a fair lady's ear. And they fell to dancing, and Romeo was suddenly struck with the exceeding beauty of a lady who danced there, who seemed to him to teach the torches to burn bright, and her beauty to show by night like a rich jewel worn by a blackamoor: beauty too rich for use, too dear for earth! like a snowy dove trooping with crows (he said), so richly did her beauty and perfections shine above the ladies her companions. While he uttered these praises he was overheard by Tybalt, a nephew of lord Capulet, who knew him by his voice to be Romeo. And this Tybalt, being of a fiery and passionate temper, could not endure that a Montague should come, under cover of a mask, to fleer and scorn (as he said) at their solemnities. And he stormed and raged exceedingly, and would have struck young Romeo dead. But his uncle, the old lord Capulet, would not suffer him to do any injury at that time, both out of respect to his guests, and because Romeo had borne himself like a gentleman, and all tongues in Verona bragged of him to be a virtuous and well-governed youth. Tybalt, forced to be patient against his will, restrained himself, but swore that this vile Montague should at another time dearly pay for his intrusion.

The dancing being done, Romeo watched the place where the lady stood; and under favour of his masking habit, which might seem to excuse in part the liberty, he presumed in the gentlest manner to take her by her hand, calling it a shrine, which if he profaned by touching it, he was a blushing pilgrim, and would kiss it for atonement. "Good pilgrim," answered the lady, "your devotion shows by far too mannerly and too courtly: saints have hands, which pilgrims may touch, but kiss not." "Have not saints lips, and pilgrims too?" said Romeo, "Ay," said the lady, "lips which they must use in prayer." "O then, my dear saint," said Romeo, "hear my prayer, and grant it, lest I despair." In such like allusions and loving conceits they were engaged, when the lady was called away to her mother. And Romeo inquiring who her mother was, discovered that the lady whose peerless beauty he was so much struck with, was young Juliet, daughter and heir to the lord Capulet, the great enemy of the Montagues; and that he had unknowingly engaged his heart to his foe. This troubled him, but it could not dissuade him from loving. As little rest had Juliet, when she found that the gentleman that

she had been talking with was Romeo and a Montague, for she had been suddenly smit with the same hasty and inconsiderate passion for Romeo, which he had conceived for her; and a prodigious birth of love it seemed to her, that she must love her enemy, and that her affections should settle there, where family considerations should induce her chiefly to hate.

It being midnight, Romeo with his companions departed; but they soon missed him, for, unable to stay away from the house where he had left his heart, he leaped the wall of an orchard which was at the back of Juliet's house. Here he had not been long, ruminating on his new love, when Juliet appeared above at a window, through which her exceeding beauty seemed to brake like the light of the sun in the east; and the moon, which shone in the orchard with a faint light, appeared to Romeo as if sick and pale with grief at the superior lustre of this new sun. And she leaning her cheek upon her hand he passionately wished himself a glove upon that hand, that he might touch her cheek. She all this while thinking herself alone, fetched a deep sigh, and exclaimed "Ah me!" Romeo, enraptured to hear her speak, said softly, and unheard by her, "O speak again, bright angel, for such you appear, being over my head, like a winged messenger from heaven whom mortals fall back to gaze upon." She, unconscious of being overheard, and full of the new passion which that night's adventure had given birth to, called upon her lover by name (whom she supposed absent): "O Romeo, Romeo!" said she, "wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father, and refuse thy name, for my sake; or if thou wilt not, be but my sworn love, and I no longer will be a Capulet." Romeo, having this encouragement, would fain have spoken, but he was desirous of hearing more; and the lady continued her passionate discourse with herself (as she thought), still chiding Romeo for being Romeo and a Montague, and wishing him some other name, or that he would put away that hated name, and for that name, which was no part of himself he should take all herself. At this loving word Romeo could no longer refrain, but taking up the dialogue as if her words had been addressed to him personally, and not merely in fancy, he bade her call him Love, or by whatever other name she pleased, for he was no longer Romeo, if that name was displeasing to her. Juliet, alarmed to hear a man's voice in the garden, did not at first know who it was, that by favour of the night and darkness had thus stumbled upon the discovery of her secret; but when he spoke again, though her ears had not yet drunk a hundred words of that tongue's uttering, yet so nice is a lover's hearing, that she immediately knew him to be young Romeo, and she expostulated with him on the danger to which he had exposed himself by climbing the orchard walls, for if any of her kinsmen should find him there, it would be death to him, being a Montague. "Alack," said Romeo, "there is more peril in your eye, than in twenty of their swords. Do you but look kind upon me, lady, and I am proof against their enmity. Better my life should be ended by their hate, than that hated life should be prolonged, to live without your love." "How came you into this place," said Juliet, "and by whose direction?" "Love directed me," answered Romeo: "I am no pilot, yet wert thou as far apart from me, as that vast shore which is washed with the farthest sea, I should adventure for such merchandise." A crimson blush came over Juliet's face, yet unseen by Romeo by reason of the night, when she reflected upon the discovery which she had made, yet not meaning to make it, of her love to Romeo. She would fain have recalled her words, but that was impossible: fain would she have stood upon form, and have kept her lover at a distance, as the custom of discreet ladies is, to frown and be perverse and give their suitors harsh denials at first; to stand off, and affect a coyness or indifference, where they most love, that their lovers may not think them too lightly or too easily won; for the difficulty of attainment increases the value of the object. But there was no room in her case for denials, or puttings off, or any of the customary arts of delay and pro-

tracted courtship. Romeo had heard from her own tongue, when she did not dream that he was near her, a confession of her love. So with an honest frankness, which the novelty of her situation excused, she confirmed the truth of what he had before heard, and addressing him by the name of *fair Montague* (love can sweeten a sour name), she begged him not to impute her easy yielding to levity or an unworthy mind, but that he must lay the fault of it (if it were a fault) upon the accident of the night which had so strangely discovered her thoughts. And she added, that though her behaviour to him might not be sufficiently prudent, measured by the custom of her sex, yet that she would prove more true than many whose prudence was dissembling, and their modesty artificial cunning.

Romeo was beginning to call the heavens to witness, that nothing was farther from his thoughts than to impute a shadow of dishonour to such an honoured lady, when she stopped him, begging him not to swear; for although she joyed in him, yet she had no joy of that night's contract: it was too rash, too unadvised, too sudden. But he being urgent with her to exchange a vow of love with him that night, she said that she already had given him hers before he requested it; meaning, when he overheard her confession; but she would retract what she then bestowed, for the pleasure of giving it again, for her bounty was as infinite as the sea, and her love as deep. From this loving conference she was called away by her nurse, who slept with her, and thought it time for her to be in bed, for it was near to daybreak; but hastily returning, she said three or four words more to Romeo, the purport of which was, that if his love was indeed honourable, and his purpose marriage, she would send a messenger to him to-morrow, to appoint a time for their marriage, when she would lay all her fortunes at his feet, and follow him as her lord through the world. While they were settling this point, Juliet was repeatedly called for by her nurse, and went in and returned, and went and returned again, for she seemed as jealous of Romeo going from her, as a young girl of her bird, which she will let hop a little from her hand, and pluck it back with a silken thread; and Romeo was as loth to part as she; for the sweetest music to lovers is the sound of each other's tongues at night. But at last they parted, wishing mutually sweet sleep and rest for that night.

The day was breaking when they parted, and Romeo, who was too full of thoughts of his mistress and that blessed meeting to allow him to sleep, instead of going home, bent his course to a monastery hard by, to find friar Laurence. The good friar was already up at his devotions, but seeing young Romeo abroad so early, he conjectured rightly that he had not been abed that night, but that some distemper of youthful affection had kept him waking. He was right in imputing the cause of Romeo's wakefulness to love, but he made a wrong guess at the object, for he thought that his love for Rosaline had kept him waking. But when Romeo revealed his new passion for Juliet, and requested the assistance of the friar to marry them that day, the holy man lifted up his eyes and hands in a sort of wonder at the sudden change in Romeo's affections, for he had been privy to all Romeo's love for Rosaline, and his many complaints of her disdain; and he said, that young men's love lay not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes. But Romeo replying, that he himself had often chidden him for doting on Rosaline, who could not love him again, whereas Juliet both loved and was beloved by him, the friar assented in some measure to his reasons; and thinking that a matrimonial alliance between young Juliet and Romeo might happily be a means of making up the long breach between the Capulets and the Montagues, which no one more lamented than this good friar, who was a friend to both the families, and had often interposed his mediation to make up the quarrel without effect; partly moved by policy, and partly by his fondness for young Romeo, to whom he could deny nothing, the old man consented to join their hands in marriage.

Now was Romeo blessed indeed, and Juliet, who knew his intent from a messenger which she had despatched according to promise, did not fail to be early at the cell of friar Laurence, where their hands were joined in holy marriage; the good friar praying the heavens to smile upon that act, and in the union of this young Montague and young Capulet to bury the old strife and long dissensions of their families.

The ceremony being over, Juliet hastened home, where she stayed impatient for the coming of night, at which time Romeo promised to come and meet her in the orchard, where they had met the night before; and the time between seemed as tedious to her, as the night before some great festival seems to an impatient child, that has got new finery which it may not put on till the morning.

That same day, about noon, Romeo's friends, Benvolio and Mercutio, walking through the streets of Verona, were met by a party of the Capulets with the impetuous Tybalt at their head. This was the same angry Tybalt who would have fought with Romeo at old lord Capulet's feast. He, seeing Mercutio, accused him bluntly of associating with Romeo, a Montague. Mercutio, who had as much fire and youthful blood in him as Tybalt, replied to this accusation with some sharpness; and in spite of all Benvolio could say to moderate their wrath, a quarrel was beginning, when Romeo himself passing that way, the fierce Tybalt turned from Mercutio to Romeo, and gave him the disgraceful appellation of villain. Romeo wished to avoid a quarrel with Tybalt above all men, because he was the kinsman of Juliet, and much beloved by her; besides, this young Montague had never thoroughly entered into the family quarrel, being by nature wise and gentle, and the name of a Capulet, which was his dear lady's name, was now rather a charm to allay resentment, than a watchword to excite fury. So he tried to reason with Tybalt, whom he saluted mildly by the name of *good Capulet*, as if he, though a Montague, had some secret pleasure in uttering that name: but Tybalt, who hated all Montagues as he hated hell, would hear no reason, but drew his weapon; and Mercutio, who knew not of Romeo's secret motive for desiring peace with Tybalt, but looked upon his present forbearance as a sort of calm dishonourable submission, with many disdainful words provoked Tybalt to the prosecution of his first quarrel with him; and Tybalt and Mercutio fought, till Mercutio fell, receiving his death's wound while Romeo and Benevolio were vainly endeavouring to part the combatants. Mercutio being dead, Romeo kept his temper no longer, but returned the scornful appellation of villain which Tybalt had given him; and they fought till Tybalt was slain by Romeo. This deadly brawl falling out in the midst of Verona at noonday, the news of it quickly brought a crowd of citizens to the spot, and among them the old lords Capulet and Montague, with their wives; and soon after arrived the prince himself, who being related to Mercutio, whom Tybalt had slain, and having had the peace of his government often disturbed by these brawls of Montagues and Capulets, came determined to put the law in strictest force against those who should be found to be offenders. Benvolio, who had been eye-witness to the fray, was commanded by the prince to relate the origin of it; which he did, keeping as near to the truth as he could without injury to Romeo, softening and excusing the part which his friend took in it. Lady Capulet, whose extreme grief for the loss of her kinsman Tybalt made her keep no bounds in her revenge, exhorted the prince to do strict justice upon his murderer, and to pay no attention to Benvolio's representation, who being Romeo's friend, and a Montague, spoke partially. Thus she pleaded against her new son-in-law, but she knew not yet that he was her son-in-law and Juliet's husband. On the other hand was to be seen lady Montague pleading for her child's life, and arguing with some justice that Romeo had done nothing worthy of punishment in taking the life of Tybalt, which was already forfeited to the law by his

having slain Mercutio. The prince, unmoved by the passionate exclamations of these women, on a careful examination of the facts, pronounced his sentence, and by that sentence Romeo was banished from Verona.

Heavy news to young Juliet, who had been but a few hours a bride, and now by this decree seemed everlastingly divorced! when the tidings reached her, she at first gave way to rage against Romeo, who had slain her dear cousin: she called him a beautiful tyrant, a fiend angelical, a ravenous dove, a lamb with a wolf's nature, a serpent-heart hid with a flowering face, and other like contradictory names, which denoted the struggles in her mind between her love and her resentment: but in the end love got the mastery, and the tears which she shed for grief that Romeo had slain her cousin, turned to drops of joy that her husband lived whom Tybalt would have slain. Then came fresh tears, and they were altogether of grief for Romeo's banishment. That word was more terrible to her than the death of many Tybalts.

Romeo, after the fray, had taken refuge in friar Laurence's cell, where he was first made acquainted with the prince's sentence, which seemed to him far more terrible than death. To him it appeared there was no world out of Verona's walls, no living out of the sight of Juliet. Heaven was there where Juliet lived, and all beyond was purgatory, torture, hell. The good friar would have applied the consolation of philosophy to his griefs; but this frantic young man would hear of none, but like a madman he tore his hair, and threw himself all along upon the ground, as he said, to take the measure of his grave. From this unseemly state he was roused by a message from his dear lady, which a little revived him; and then the friar took the advantage to expostulate with him on the unmanly weakness which he had shown. He had slain Tybalt, but would he also slay himself, slay his dear lady who lived but in his life? The noble form of man, he said, was but a shape of wax, when it wanted the courage which should keep it firm. The law had been lenient to him, that instead of death, which he had incurred, had pronounced by the prince's mouth only banishment. He had slain Tybalt, but Tybalt would have slain him: there was a sort of happiness in that. Juliet was alive, and (beyond all hope) had become his dear wife; therein he was most happy. All these blessings, as the friar made them out to be, did Romeo put from him like a sullen misbehaved wench. And the friar bade him beware, for such as despaired (he said) died miserable. Then when Romeo was a little calmed, he counselled him that he should go that night and secretly take his leave of Juliet, and thence proceed straightways to Mantua, at which place he should sojourn, till the friar found a fit occasion to publish his marriage, which might be a joyful means of reconciling their families; and then he did not doubt but the prince would be moved to pardon him, and he would return with twenty times more joy than he went forth with grief. Romeo was convinced by these wise counsels of the friar, and took his leave to go and seek his lady, purposing to stay with her that night, and by daybreak pursue his journey alone to Mantua; to which place the good friar promised to send him letters from time to time, acquainting him with the state of affairs at home.

That night Romeo passed with his dear wife, gaining secret admission to her chamber, from the orchard in which he had heard her confession of love the night before. That had been a night of unmixed joy and rapture; but the pleasures of this night, and the delight which these lovers took in each other's society, were sadly allayed with the prospect of parting, and the fatal adventures of the past day. The unwelcome daybreak seemed to come too soon, and when Juliet heard the morning-song of the lark, she would fain have persuaded herself that it was the nightingale, which sings by night; but it was too truly the lark which sung, and a discordant and unpleasing note it seemed to her; and the streaks of day in the east too certainly pointed out that it was time for these lovers to part. Romeo took his leave of his dear wife with a heavy heart,

promising to write to her from Mantua every hour in the day; and when he had descended from her chamber-window, as he stood below her on the ground, in that sad foreboding state of mind in which she was, he appeared to her eyes as one dead in the bottom of a tomb. Romeo's mind misgave him in like manner; but now he was forced hastily to depart, for it was death for him to be found within the walls of Verona after daybreak.

This was but the beginning of the tragedy of this pair of star-crossed lovers. Romeo had not been gone many days before the old lord Capulet proposed a match for Juliet. The husband he had chosen for her, not dreaming that she was married already, was Count Paris, a gallant, young, and noble gentleman, no unworthy suitor to the young Juliet, if she had never seen Romeo.

The terrified Juliet was in a sad perplexity at her father's offer. She pleaded her youth unsuitable to marriage, the recent death of Tybalt, which had left her spirits too weak to meet a husband with any face of joy, and how indecorous it would show for the family of the Capulets to be celebrating a nuptial-feast, when his funeral solemnities were hardly over: she pleaded every reason against the match, but the true one, namely, that she was married already. But lord Capulet was deaf to all her excuses, and in a peremptory manner ordered her to get ready, for by the following Thursday she should be married to Paris: and having found her a husband rich, young, and noble, such as the proudest maid in Verona might joyfully accept, he could not bear that out of an affected coyness, as he construed her denial, she should oppose obstacles to her own good fortune.

In this extremity Juliet applied to the friendly friar, always her counsellor in distress, and he asking her if she had resolution to undertake a desperate remedy, and she answering that she would go into the grave alive rather than marry Paris, her own dear husband living; he directed her to go home, and appear merry, and give her consent to marry Paris, according to her father's desire, and on the next night, which was the night before the marriage, to drink off the contents of a phial which he then gave her, the effect of which would be, that for two-and-forty hours after drinking it she should appear cold and lifeless; that when the bridegroom came to fetch her in the morning he would find her to appearance dead; that then she would be borne, as the manner in that country was, uncovered, on a bier, to be buried in the family vault; that if she could put off womanish fear, and consent to this terrible trial, in forty-two hours after swallowing the liquid (such was its certain operation) she would be sure to awake, as from a dream; and before she should awake he would let her husband know their drift, and he should come in the night and bear her thence to Mantua. Love, and the dread of marrying Paris, gave young Juliet strength to undertake this horrible adventure; and she took the phial of the friar, promising to observe his directions.

Going from the monastery, she met the young count Paris, and, modestly dissembling, promised to become his bride. This was joyful news to the lord Capulet and his wife. It seemed to put youth into the old man; and Juliet, who had displeased him exceedingly by her refusal of the count, was his darling again, now she promised to be obedient. All things in the house were in a bustle against the approaching nuptials. No cost was spared to prepare such festival rejoicings as Verona had never before witnessed.

On the Wednesday night Juliet drank off the potion. She had many misgivings lest the friar, to avoid the blame which might be imputed to him for marrying her to Romeo, had given her poison; but then he was always known for a holy man: then lest she should awake before the time that Romeo was to come for her; whether the terror of the place, a vault full of dead Capulets' bones, and where Tybalt, all bloody, lay festering in his shroud, would not be enough to drive her distracted: again she thought of all the stories she had heard of spirits haunting the places where their bodies are bestowed. But then

her love for Romeo, and her aversion for Paris, returned, and she desperately swallowed the draught, and became insensible.

When young Paris came early in the morning with music to awaken his bride, instead of a living Juliet, her chamber presented the dreary spectacle of a lifeless corse. What death to his hopes! What confusion then reigned through the whole house! Poor Paris lamenting his bride, whom most detestable death had beguiled him of, had divorced from him, even before their hands were joined. But still more piteous it was to hear the mournings of the old lord and lady Capulet, who having but this one, one poor loving child to rejoice and solace in, cruel death had snatched her from their sight, just as these careful parents were on the point of seeing her advanced (as they thought) by a promising and advantageous match. Now all things that were ordained for the festival were turned from their properties to do the office of a black funeral. The wedding cheer served for a sad burial feast, the bridal hymns were changed to sullen dirges, the sprightly instruments to melancholy bells, and the flowers that should have been strewed in the bride's path, now served but to strew her corse. Now, instead of a priest to marry her, a priest was needed to bury her; and she was borne to church indeed, not to augment the cheerful hopes of the living, but to swell the dreary numbers of the dead.

Bad news, which always travels faster than good, now brought the dismal story of his Juliet's death to Romeo at Mantua, before the messenger could arrive who was sent from friar Laurence to apprise him that these were mock funerals only, and but the shadow and representation of death, and that his dear lady lay in the tomb but for a short while, expecting when Romeo should come to release her from that dreary mansion. Just before, Romeo had been unusually joyful and light-hearted. He had dreamed in the night that he was dead (a strange dream, that gave a dead man leave to think,) and that his lady came and found him dead, and breathed such life with kisses in his lips, that he revived, and was an emperor! And now that a messenger came from Verona, he thought surely it was to confirm some good news which his dreams had presaged. But when the contrary to this flattering vision appeared, and that it was his lady who was dead in truth, whom he could not revive by any kisses, he ordered horses to be got ready, for he determined that night to visit Verona, and to see his lady in her tomb. And as mischief is swift to enter into the thoughts of desperate men, he called to mind a poor apothecary, whose shop in Mantua he had lately passed, and from the beggarly appearance of the man, who seemed famished, and the wretched show in his shop of empty boxes ranged on dirty shelves, and other tokens of extreme wretchedness, he had said at the time (perhaps having some misgivings that his own disastrous life might haply meet with a conclusion as desperate), "If a man were to need poison, which by the law of Mantua it is death to sell, here lives a poor wretch who would sell it him." These words of his now came into his mind, and he sought out the apothecary, who after some pretended scruples, Romeo offering him gold which his poverty could not resist, sold him a poison, which, if he swallowed, he told him, if he had the strength of twenty men, would quickly despatch him.

With this poison he set out for Verona, to have a sight of his dear lady in her tomb, meaning, when he had satisfied his sight, to swallow the poison, and be buried by her side. He reached Verona at midnight, and found the churchyard, in the midst of which was situated the ancient tomb of the Capulets. He had provided a light, and a spade, and wrenching iron, and was proceeding to break open the monument, when he was interrupted by a voice, which, by the name of *vile Montague*, bade him desist from his unlawful business. It was the young count Paris, who had come to the tomb of Juliet at that unseasonable time of night, to strew flowers, and to weep over the grave of her that should have been his bride. He knew not what an interest Romeo had in

the dead, but knowing him to be a Montague, and (as he supposed) a sworn foe to all the Capulets, he judged that he was come by night to do some villanous shame to the dead bodies; therefore in an angry tone he bade him desist; and as a criminal, condemned by the laws of Verona to die if he were found within the walls of the city, he would have apprehended him. Romeo urged Paris to leave him, and warned him by the fate of Tybalt, who lay buried there, not to provoke his anger, or draw down another sin upon his head, by forcing him to kill him. But the count in scorn refused his warning, and laid hands on him as a felon; which Romeo resisting, they fought, and Paris fell. When Romeo, by the help of a light, came to see who it was that he had slain, that it was Paris, who (he learned in his way from Mantua) should have married Juliet, he took the dead youth by the hand, as one whom misfortune had made a companion, and said that he would bury him in a triumphal grave, meaning in Juliet's grave, which he now opened: and there lay his lady, as one whom death had no power upon to change a feature or complexion in her matchless beauty, or as if death were amorous, and the lean abhorred monster kept her there for his delight; for she lay yet fresh and blooming, as she had fallen to sleep when she swallowed that benumbing potion; and near her lay Tybalt in his bloody shroud, whom Romeo seeing, begged pardon of his lifeless corse, and for Juliet's sake called him *cousin*, and said that he was about to do him a favour by putting his enemy to death. Here Romeo took his last leave of his lady's lips, kissing them; and here he shook the burden of his cross stars from his weary body, swallowing that poison which the apothecary had sold him, whose operation was fatal and real, not like that dissembling potion which Juliet had swallowed, the effect of which was now nearly expiring, and she about to awake to complain that Romeo had not kept his time, or that he had come too soon.

For now the hour was come at which the friar had promised that she should awake; and he, having learned that his letters which he had sent to Mantua, by some unlucky detention of the messenger, had never reached Romeo, came himself, provided with a pickaxe and lantern, to deliver the lady from her confinement; but he was surprised to find a light already burning in the Capulet's monument, and to see swords and blood near it, and Romeo and Paris lying breathless by the monument.

Before he could entertain a conjecture, to imagine how these fatal accidents had fallen out, Juliet awoke out of her trance, and seeing the friar near her, she remembered the place where she was, and the occasion of her being there, and asked for Romeo: but the friar, hearing a noise, bade her come out of that place of death, and of unnatural sleep, for a greater power than they could contradict had thwarted their intents; and being frighted by the noise of people coming, he fled: but when Juliet saw the cup closed in her true love's hands, she guessed that poison had been the cause of his end, and she would have swallowed the dregs if any had been left, and she kissed his still warm lips to try if any poison yet did hang upon them; then hearing a nearer noise of people coming, she quickly unsheathed a dagger which she wore, and stabbing herself, died by her true Romeo's side.

The watch by this time had come up to the place. A page belonging to count Paris, who had witnessed the fight between his master and Romeo, had given the alarm, which had spread among the citizens, who went up and down the streets of Verona confusedly, exclaiming, A Paris, a Romeo, a Juliet, as the rumour had imperfectly reached them, till the uproar brought lord Montague and lord Capulet out of their beds with the prince, to inquire into the causes of the disturbance. The friar had been apprehended by some of the watch, coming from the churchyard, trembling, sighing, and weeping, in a suspicious manner. A great multitude being assembled at the Capulets' monument, the friar was demanded by the prince to deliver what he knew of these strange and disastrous accidents.

And there, in the presence of the old lords Montague and Capulet, he faithfully related the story of their children's fatal love, the part he took in promoting their marriage, in the hope in that union to end the long quarrels between their families: how Romeo, there dead, was husband to Juliet: and Juliet, there dead, was Romeo's faithful wife: how, before he could find a fit opportunity to divulge their marriage, another match was projected for Juliet, who, to avoid the crime of a second marriage, swallowed the sleeping draught (as he advised), and all thought her dead: how meantime he wrote to Romeo, to come and take her thence when the force of the potion should cease, and by what unfortunate miscarriage of the messenger the letters never reached Romeo: further than this the friar could not follow the story, nor knew more than that coming himself to deliver Juliet from that place of death, he found the count Paris and Romeo slain. The remainder of the transactions was supplied by the narration of the page who had seen Paris and Romeo fight, and by the servant who came with Romeo from Verona, to whom this faithful lover had given letters to be delivered to his father in the event of his death, which made good the friar's words, confessing his marriage with Juliet, imploring the forgiveness of his parents, acknowledging the buying of the poison of the poor apothecary, and his intent in coming to the monument, to die, and lie with Juliet. All these circumstances agreed together to clear the friar from any hand he could be supposed to have in these complicated slaughters, further than as the unintended consequences of his own well-meant, yet too artificial and subtle contrivances.

And the prince, turning to these old lords, Montague and Capulet, rebuked them for their brutal and irrational enmities, and showed them what a scourge Heaven had laid upon such offences, that it had found means even through the love of their children to punish their unnatural hate. And these old rivals, no longer enemies, agreed to bury their long strife in their children's graves; and lord Capulet requested lord Montague to give him his hand, calling him by the name of brother, as if in acknowledgment of the union of their families by the marriage of the young Capulet and Montague; and saying that lord Montague's hand (in token of reconcilement) was all he demanded for his daughter's jointure: but lord Montague said he would give him more, for he would raise her statue of pure gold, that while Verona kept its name, no figure should be so esteemed for its richness and workmanship as that of the true and faithful Juliet. And lord Capulet in return said, that he would raise another statue to Romeo. So did these poor old lords, when it was too late, strive to outdo each other in mutual courtesies; while so deadly had been their rage and enmity in past times, that nothing but the fearful overthrow of their children (poor sacrifices to their quarrels and dissensions) could remove the rooted hates and jealousies of these noble families.

# HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

GERTRUDE, queen of Denmark, becoming a widow by the sudden death of king Hamlet, in less than two months after his death married his brother Claudius, which was noted by all people at the time for a strange act of indiscretion, or unfeelingness, or worse: for this Claudius did no ways resemble her late husband in the qualities of his person or his mind, but was as con-

temptible in outward appearance as he was base and unworthy in disposition; and suspicions did not fail to arise in the minds of some that he had privately made away with bis brother, the late king, with the view of marrying his widow, and ascending the throne of Denmark, to the exclusion of young Hamlet, the son of the buried king, and lawful successor to the throne.

But upon no one did this unadvised action of the queen make such impression as upon this young prince, who loved and venerated the memory of his dead father almost to idolatry, and being of a nice sense of honour, and a most exquisite practiser of propriety himself, did sorely take to heart this unworthy conduct of his mother Gertrude; insomuch that, between grief for his father's death and shame for his mother's marriage, this young prince was overclouded with a deep melancholy, and lost all his mirth and all his good looks; all his customary pleasure in books forsook him; his princely exercises and sports, proper to his youth, were no longer acceptable; he grew weary of the world, which seemed to him an unweeded garden, where all the wholesome flowers were choked up, and nothing but weeds could thrive. Not that the prospect of exclusion from the throne, his lawful inheritance, weighed so much upon his spirits, though that to a young and high-minded prince was a bitter wound and a sore indignity; but what so galled him, and took away all his cheerful spirits, was that his mother had shown herself so forgetful to his father's memory: and such a father! who had been to her so loving and so gentle a husband! and then she always appeared as loving and obedient a wife to him, and would hang upon him as if her affection grew to him: and now, within two months, or, as it seemed to young Hamlet, less than two months, she had married again—married his uncle, her dead husband's brother, in itself a highly improper and unlawful marriage from the nearness of relationship, but made much more so by the indecent haste with which it was concluded, and the unkingly character of the man whom she had chosen to be the partner of her throne and bed. This it was which, more than the loss of ten kingdoms, dashed the spirits and brought a cloud over the mind of this honourable young prince.

In vain was all that his mother Gertrude or the king could do or contrive to divert him; he still appeared in court in a suit of deep black, as mourning for the king his father's death, which mode of dress he had never laid aside, not even in compliment to his mother upon the day she was married; nor could he be brought to join in any of the festivities or rejoicings of that (as appeared to him) disgraceful day.

What mostly troubled him was an uncertainty about the manner of his father's death. It was given out by Claudius that a serpent had stung him: but young Hamlet had shrewd suspicions that Claudius himself was the serpent; in plain English, that he had murdered him for his crown, and that the serpent who stung his father did now sit on the throne.

How far he was right in this conjecture, and what he ought to think of his mother, how far she was privy to this murder, and whether by her consent or knowledge, or without, it came to pass, were the doubts which continually harassed and distracted him.

A rumour had reached the ear of young Hamlet, that an apparition, exactly resembling the dead king his father, had been seen by the soldiers upon watch, on the platform before the palace, at midnight, for two or three nights successively. The figure came constantly clad in the same suit of armour, from head to foot, which the dead king was known to have worn: and they who saw it (Hamlet's bosom-friend Horatio was one) agreed in their testimony as to the time and manner of its appearance: that it came just as the clock struck twelve; that it looked pale, with a face more of sorrow than of anger; that its beard was grisly, and the colour a *sable silvered*, as they had seen it in his lifetime: that it made no answer when they spoke to it, yet once they thought

it lifted up its head, and addressed itself to motion, as if it were about to speak; but in that moment the morning cock crew, and it shrunk in haste away, and vanished out of their sight.

The young prince, strangely amazed at their relation, which was too consistent and agreeing with itself to disbelieve, concluded that it was his father's ghost which they had seen, and determined to take his watch with the soldiers that night, that he might have a chance of seeing it: for he reasoned with himself, that such an appearance did not come for nothing, but that the ghost had something to impart, and though it had been silent hitherto, yet it would speak to him. And he waited with impatience for the coming of night.

When night came he took his stand with Horatio, and Marcellus, one of the guard, upon the platform, where this apparition was accustomed to walk: and, it being a cold night, and the air unusually raw and nipping, Hamlet and Horatio and their companion fell into some talk about the coldness of the night, which was suddenly broken off by Horatio announcing that the ghost was coming.

At the sight of his father's spirit Hamlet was struck with a sudden surprise and fear. He at first called upon the angels and heavenly ministers to defend them, for he knew not whether it were a good spirit or bad—whether it came for good or for evil: but he gradually assumed more courage; and his father (as it seemed to him) looked upon him so piteously, and as it were desiring to have conversation with him, and did in all respects appear so like himself as he was when he lived, that Hamlet could not help addressing him: he called him by his name, Hamlet, King, Father; and conjured him that he would tell the reason why he had left his grave, where they had seen him quietly bestowed, to come again and visit the earth and the moonlight: and besought him that he would let them know if there was anything which they could do to give him peaçe to his spirit. And the ghost beckoned to Hamlet that he should go with him to some more removed place, where they might be alone; and Horatio and Marcellus would have dissuaded the young prince from following it, for they feared lest it should be some evil spirit who would tempt him to the neighbouring sea, or to the top of some dreadful cliff, and there put on some horrible shape which might deprieve the prince of his reason. But their counsels and entreaties could not alter Hamlet's determination, who cared too little about life to fear the losing of it; and, as to his soul, he said, what could the spirit do to that, being a thing immortal as itself? And he felt as hardy as a lion, and bursting from them, who did all they could to hold him, he followed whithersoever the spirit led him.

And when they were alone together, the spirit broke silence, and told him that he was the ghost of Hamlet, his father, who had been cruelly murdered, and he told the manner of it; that it was done by his own brother Claudius, Hamlet's uncle, as Hamlet had already but too much suspected, for the hope of succeeding to his bed and crown. That as he was sleeping in his garden, his custom always in the afternoon, this treasonous brother stole upon him in his sleep and poured the juice of poisonous henbane into his ears, which has such an antipathy to the life of man that swift as quicksilver it courses through all the veins of the body, baking up the blood, and spreading a crust-like leprosy all over the skin: thus sleeping, by a brother's hand he was cut off at once from his crown, his queen, and his life; and he adjured Hamlet, if he did ever his dear father love, that he would revenge his foul murder. And the ghost lamented to his son, that his mother should so fall off from virtue as to prove false to the wedded love of her first husband, and to marry his murderer: but he cautioned Hamlet, howsoever he proceeded in his revenge against his wicked uncle, by no means to act any violence against the person of his mother, but to leave her to heaven and to the stings and thorns of conscience. And

Hamlet promised to observe the ghost's direction in all things; and the ghost vanished.

And when Hamlet was left alone he took up a solemn resolution that all he had in his memory, all that he had ever learned by books or observation, should be instantly forgotten by him, and nothing live in his brain but the memory of what the ghost had told him, and enjoined him to do. And Hamlet related the particulars of the conversation which had passed to none but his dear Horatio; and he enjoined both to him and Marcellus the strictest secrecy as to what they had seen that night.

The terror which the sight of the ghost had left upon the senses of Hamlet, he being weak and dispirited before, almost unhinged his mind, and drove him beside his reason. And he, fearing that it would continue to have this effect, which might subject him to observation, and set his uncle upon his guard, if he suspected that he was meditating anything against him, or that Hamlet really knew more of his father's death than he professed, took up a strange resolution from that time to counterfeit as if he were really and truly mad, thinking that he would be less an object of suspicion when his uncle should believe him incapable of any serious project, and that his real perturbation of mind would be best covered and pass concealed under a disguise of pretended lunacy.

From this time Hamlet affected a certain wildness and strangeness in his apparel, his speech, and behaviour, and did so excellently couterfeit the madman, that the king and queen were both deceived; and not thinking his grief for his father's death a sufficient cause to produce such a distemper—for they knew not of the appearance of the ghost—they concluded that his malady was love, and they thought they had found out the object.

Before Hamlet fell into the melancholy way which has been related, he had dearly loved a fair maid called Ophelia, the daughter of Polonius, the king's chief counsellor in affairs of state. He had sent her letters and rings, and made many tenders of his affection to her, and importuned her with love in honourable fashion; and she had given belief to his vows and importunities. But the melancholy which he fell into latterly had made him neglect her; and from the time he conceived the project of counterfeiting madness, he affected to treat her with unkindness and a sort of rudeness; but she, good lady, rather than reproach him with being false to her, persuaded herself that it was nothing but the disease in his mind, and no settled unkindness, which had made him less observent of her than formerly; and she compared the faculties of his once noble mind and excellent understanding, impaired as they were with the deep melancholy that oppressed him, to sweet bells, which in themselves are capable of most exquisite music, but when jangled out of tune, or rudely handled, produce only a harsh and unpleasing sound.

Though the rough business which Hamlet had in hand, the revenging of his father's death upon his murderer, did not suit with the playful state of courtship, or admit of the society of so idle a passion as love now seemed to him, yet it could not hinder but that soft thoughts of his Ophelia would come between; and in one of these moments, when he thought that his treatment of this gentle lady had been unreasonably harsh, he wrote her a letter full of wild starts of passion, and in extravagant terms, such as agreed with his supposed madness, but mixed with some gentle touches of affection, which could but not show to this honoured lady that a deep love for her yet lay at the bottom of his heart. He bade her to doubt the stars were fire, and to doubt that the sun did move, to doubt truth to be a liar, but never to doubt that he loved; with more of such extravagant phrases. This letter Ophelia dutifully showed to her father, and the old man thought himself bound to communicate it to the king and queen, who from that time supposed that the true cause of Hamlet's madness was love. And the queen wished that the good beauties of Ophelia might be

the happy cause of his wildness, for so she hoped that her virtues might happily restore him to his accustomed way again, to both their honours.

But Hamlet's malady lay deeper than she supposed, or than could so be cured. His father's ghost, which he had seen, still haunted his imagination, and the sacred injunction to revenge his murder gave him no rest till it was accomplished. Every hour of delay seemed to him a sin, and a violation of his father's commands. Yet how to compass the death of the king, surrounded as he constantly was with his guards, was no easy matter. Or if it had been the presence of the queen, Hamlet's mother, who was generally with the king, was a restraint upon his purpose, which he could not break through. Besides, the very circumstance that the usurper was his mother's husband, filled him with some remorse, and still blunted the edge of his purpose. The mere act of putting a fellow-creature to death was in itself odious and terrible to a disposition naturally so gentle as Hamlet's was. His very melancholy, and the dejection of spirits he had so long been in, produced an irresoluteness and wavering of purpose, which kept him from proceeding to extremities. Moreover, he could not help having some scruples upon his mind whether the spirit which he had seen was indeed his father, or whether it might not be the devil, who he had heard has power to take any form he pleases, and who might have assumed his father's shape only to take advantage of his weakness and his melancholy, to drive him to the doing of so desperate an act as murder. And he determined that he would have more certain grounds to go upon than a vision, or apparition, which might be a delusion.

While he was in this irresolute mind, there came to the court certain players, in whom Hamlet formerly used to take delight, and particularly to hear one of them speak a tragical speech, describing the death of old Priam, king of Troy, with the grief of Hecuba, his queen. Hamlet welcomed his old friends, the players, and remembering how that speech had formerly given him pleasure, requested the player to repeat it, which he did in so lively a manner, setting forth the cruel murder of the feeble old king, with the destruction of his people and city by fire, and the mad grief of the old queen, running barefoot up and down the palace, with a poor clout upon that head where a crown had been, and with nothing but a blanket upon her loins, snatched up in haste, where she had worn a royal robe: that not only it drew tears from all that stood by, who thought they saw the real scene, so lively was it represented, but even the player himself delivered it with a broken voice and real tears. This put Hamlet upon thinking, if that player could so work himself up to passion by a mere fictitious speech, to weep for one that he had never seen—for Hecuba, that had been dead so many hundred years, how dull was he, who having a real motive and cue for passion, a real king and a dear father murdered, was yet so little moved, that his revenge all this while had seemed to have slept in dull and muddy forgetfulness! And while he meditated on actors and acting, and the powerful effects which a good play, represented to the life, has upon the spectator, he remembered the instance of some murderer, who, seeing a murder on the stage, was by the mere force of the scene and resemblance of circumstances so affected, that on the spot he confessed the crime which he had committed. And he determined that these players should play something like the murder of his father before his uncle, and he would watch narrowly what effect it might have upon him, and from his looks he would be able to gather with more certainty if he were the murderer or not. To this effect he ordered a play to be prepared, to the representation of which he invited the king and queen.

The story of the play was a murder done in Vienna upon a duke. The duke's name was Gonzago, his wife Baptista. The play showed how one Lucianus, a near relation to the duke, poisoned him in his garden for his estate, and how the murderer in a short time after got the love of Gonzago's wife.

At the representation of this play, the king, who did not know the trap which was laid for him, was present, with his queen and the whole court: Hamlet sitting attentively near him to observe his looks. The play began with a conversation between Gonzago and his wife, in which the lady made many protestations of love, and of never marrying a second husband, if she should outlive Gonzago; wishing she might be accursed if she ever took a second husband, and adding that no woman ever did so but those wicked women who kill their first husbands. Hamlet observed the king, his uncle, change colour at this expression, and that it was as bad as wormwood both to him and to the queen. But when Lucianus, according to the story, came to poison Gonzago sleeping in the garden, the strong resemblance which it bore to his own wicked act upon the late king, his brother, whom he had poisoned in his garden, so struck upon the conscience of this usurper, that he was unable to sit out the rest of the play, but on a sudden calling for lights to his chamber, and affecting or partly feeling a sudden sickness, he abruptly left the theatre. The king being departed, the play was given over. Now Hamlet had seen enough to be satisfied that the words of the ghost were true, and no illusion; and in a fit of gaiety, like that which comes over a man who suddenly has some great doubt or scruple resolved, he swore to Horatio that he would take the ghost's word for a thousand pounds. But before he could make up his resolution as to what measures of revenge he should take, now he was certainly informed that his uncle was his father's murderer, he was sent for by the queen, his mother, to a private conference in her closet.

It was by desire of the king that the queen sent for Hamlet, that she might signify to her son how much his late behaviour had displeased them both; and the king, wishing to know all that passed at that conference, and thinking that the too partial report of a mother might let slip some part of Hamlet's words, which it might much import the king to know, Polonius, the old councillor of state, was ordered to plant himself behind the hangings in the queen's closet, where he might unseen hear all that passed. This artifice was particularly adapted to the disposition of Polonius, who was a man grown old in crooked maxims and policies of state, and delighted to get at the knowledge of matters in an indirect and cunning way.

Hamlet being come to his mother, she began to tax him in the roundest way with his actions and behaviour, and she told him that he had given great offence to *his father*, meaning the king, his uncle, whom, because he had married her, she called Hamlet's father. Hamlet, sorely indignant that she should give so dear and honoured a name as father seemed to him, to a wretch who was indeed no better than the murderer of his true father, with some sharpness replied, "Mother, *you* have much offended *my father*." The queen said that was but an idle answer. "As good as the question deserved," said Hamlet. The queen asked him if he had forgotten who it was he was speaking to. "Alas!" replied Hamlet, "I wish I could forget. You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife; and you are my mother; I wish you were not what you are." "Nay then," said the queen, "if you show me so little respect, I will set those to you that can speak," and was going to send the king or Polonious to him. But Hamlet would not let her go, now he had her alone, till he had tried if his words could not bring her to some sense of her wicked life; and, taking her by the wrist, he held her fast, and made her sit down. She, affrighted at his earnest manner, and fearful lest in his lunacy he should do her a mischief, cried out; and a voice was heard from behind the hangings, "Help, help, the queen!" which Hamlet hearing, and verily thinking that it was the king himself there concealed, he drew his sword, and stabbed at the place where the voice came from, as he would have stabbed a rat that ran there, till the voice ceasing, he concluded the person to be dead. But when he dragged forth the body, it was not the king, but Polonious, the

old officious counsellor, that had planted himself as a spy behind the hangings. "O me!" exclaimed the queen, "what a rash and bloody deed have you done!" "A bloody deed, mother," replied Hamlet, "but not so bad as yours, who killed a king and married his brother." Hamlet had gone too far to leave off here. He was now in the humour to speak plainly to his mother, and he pursued it. And though the fault of parents are to be tenderly treated by their children, yet in the case of great crimes the son may have leave to speak even to his own mother with some harshness, so as that harshness is meant for her good, and turn her from her wicked ways, and not done for the purpose of upbraiding. And now, this virtuous prince did in moving terms represent to the queen the heinousness of her offence, in being so forgetful of the dead king, his father, as in so short a space of time to marry with his brother and reputed murderer: such an act as after the vows which she had sworn to her first husband, was enough to make all vows of women suspected, and all virtue to be accounted hypocrisy, wedding contracts to be less than gamesters' oaths, and religion to be a mockery and a mere form of words. He said she had done such a deed, that the heavens blushed at it, and the earth was sick of her because of it. And he showed her two pictures, the one of the late king, her first husband, and the other of the present king, her second husband, and he bade her mark the difference: what a grace was on the brow of his father. how like a god he looked! the curls of Apollo, the forehead of Jupiter, the eye of Mars, and a posture like to Mercury newly alighted on some heaven-kissing bill! this man, he said, *was* her husband. And then he showed her whom she had got in his stead: how like a blight or a mildew he looked, for so he had blasted his wholesome brother. And the queen was sore ashamed that he should so turn her eyes inward upon her soul, which she now saw so black and deformed. And he asked her how she could continue to live with this man, and be a wife to him, who had murdered her first husband, and got the crown by as false means as a thief——And just as he spoke, the ghost of his father, such as he was in his lifetime, and such as he had lately seen it, entered the room, and Hamlet, in great terror, asked what it would have; and the ghost said that it came to remind him of the revenge he hcd promised, which Hamlet seemed to have forget: and the ghost bade him speak to his mother, for the grief and terror she was in would else kill her. It then vanished, and was seen by none but Hamlet, neither could he, by pointing to where it stood, or by any description, make his mother perceive it; who was terribly frighted all this while to hear him conversing, as it seemed to her, with nothing: and she imputed it to the disorder of his mind. But Hamlet begged her not to flatter her wicked soul in such a manner as to think that it was his madness, and not her own offences, which had brought his father's spirit again on the earth. And he bade her feel his pulse, how temperately it beat, not like a madman's. And he begged of her with tears, to confess herself to heaven for what was past, and for the future to avoid the company of the king, and be no more as a wife to him: and when she should show herself a mother to him, by respecting his father's memory, he would ask a blessing of her as a son. And she promising to observe his directions, the conference ended.

And now Hamlet was at leisure to consider who it was that in his unfortunate rashness he had killed: and when he came to see that it was Polonius, the father of the lady Ophelia, whom he so dearly loved, he drew apart the dead body, and his spirits being now a little quieter, he wept for what he had done.

This unfortunate death of Polonius gave the king a pretence for sending Hamlet out of the kingdom. He would willingly have put him to death, fearing him as dangerous; but he dreaded the people, who loved Hamlet; and the queen, who, with all her faults, doted upon the prince, her son. So

this subtle king, under pretence of providing for Hamlet's safety, that he might not be called to account for Polonius's death, caused him to be conveyed on board a ship bound for England, under the care of two courtiers, by whom he despatched letters to the English court, which at that time was in subjection and paid tribute to Denmark, requiring, for special reasons there pretended, that Hamlet should be put to death as soon as he landed on English ground. Hamlet, suspecting some treachery, in the night time secretly got at the letters, and skilfully erasing his own name, he in the stead of it put in the names of those two courtiers, who had the charge of him, to be put to death: then sealing up the letters, he put them into their place again. Soon after, the ship was attacked by pirates, and a sea-fight commenced; in the course of which Hamlet, desirous to show his valour, with sword in hand singly boarded the enemy's vessel; while his own ship in a cowardly manner bore away, and leaving him to his fate, the two courtiers made the best of their way to England, charged with those letters the sense of which Hamlet had altered to their own deserved destruction.

The pirates, who had the prince in their power, showed themselves gentle enemies; and knowing whom they had got prisoner, in the hope that the prince might do them a good turn at court in recompense for any favour they might show him, they set Hamlet on shore at the nearest port in Denmark. From that place Hamlet wrote to the king, acquainting him with the strange chance which had brought him back to his own country, and saying that on the next day he should present himself before his majesty. When he got home, a sad spectacle offered itself the first thing to his eyes.

This was the funeral of the young and beautiful Ophelia, his once dear mistress. The wits of this young lady had begun to turn ever since her poor father's death. That he should die a violent death, and by the hands of the prince whom she loved, so affected this tender young maid, that in a little time she grew perfectly distracted, and would go about giving flowers away to the ladies of the court, and saying that they were for her father's burial, singing songs about love and about death, and sometimes such as had no meaning at all, as if she had no memory of what happened to her. There was a willow which grew slanting over a brook, and reflected its leaves in the stream. To this brook she came one day when she was unwatched, with garlands she had been making, mixed up of daisies and nettles, flowers and weeds together, and clambering up to hang her garland upon the boughs of the willow, a bough broke and precipitated this fair young maid, garland, and all that she had gathered, into the water, where her clothes bore her up for a while, during which she chanted scraps of old tunes, like one insensible to her own distress, or as if she were a creature natural to that element: but long it was not before her garments, heavy with the wet, pulled her in from her melodious singing to a muddy and miserable death. It was the funeral of this fair maid which her brother Laertes was celebrating, the king and queen and whole court being present when Hamlet arrived. He knew not what all this show imported, but stood on one side, not inclining to interrupt the ceremony. He saw the flowers strewed upon her grave, as the custom was in maiden burials, which the queen herself threw in; and as she threw them, she said, "Sweets to the sweet! I thought to have decked thy bride-bed, sweet maid, not to have strewed thy grave. Thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife." And he heard her brother wish that violets might spring from her grave: and he saw him leap into the grave all frantic with grief, and bid the attendants pile mountains of earth upon him, that he might be buried with her. And Hamlet's love for this fair maid came back to him, and he could not bear that a brother should show so much transport of grief, for he thought that he loved Ophelia better than forty thousand brothers. Then discovering himself, he leaped into the grave where Laertes was, all as frantic or more frantic than he, and Laertes knowing

him to be Hamlet, who had been the cause of his father's and his sister's death, grappled him by the throat as an enemy, till the attendants parted them: and Hamlet, after the funeral, excused his hasty act in throwing himself into the grave as if to brave Laertes; but he said he could not bear that any one should seem to outgo him in grief for the death of the fair Ophelia. And for the time these two noble youths seemed reconciled.

But out of the grief and anger of Laertes for the death of his father and Ophelia, the king, Hamlet's wicked uncle, contrived destruction for Hamlet. He set on Laertes, under cover of peace and reconciliation, to challenge Hamlet to a friendly trial of skill at fencing, which Hamlet accepting, a day was appointed to try the match. At this match all the court was present, and Laertes, by direction of the king, prepared a poisoned weapon. Upon this match great wagers were laid by the courtiers, as both Hamlet and Laertes were known to excel at this sword-play; and Hamlet taking up the foils chose one, not at all suspecting the treachery of Laertes, or being careful to examine Laertes' weapon, who, instead of a foil or blunted sword, which the laws of fencing require, made use of one with a point, and poisoned. At first Laertes did but play with Hamlet, and suffered him to gain some advantages, which the dissembling king magnified and extolled beyond measure, drinking to Hamlet's success, and wagering rich bets upon the issue: but after a few passes, Laertes growing warm made a deadly thrust at Hamlet with his poisoned weapon, and gave him a mortal blow. Hamlet, incensed, but not knowing the whole of the treachery, in the scuffle exchanged his own innocent weapon for Laertes' deadly one, and with a thrust of Laertes' own sword repaid Laertes home, who was thus justly caught in his own treachery. In this instant the queen shrieked out that she was poisoned. She had inadvertently drunk out of a bowl which the king had prepared for Hamlet, in case that, being warm in fencing, he should call for drink: into this the treacherous king had infused a deadly poison, to make sure of Hamlet, if Laertes had failed. He had forgotten to warn the queen of the bowl, which she drank off, and immediately died, exclaiming with her last breath that she was poisoned. Hamlet, suspecting some treachery, ordered the doors to be shut, while he sought it out. Laertes told him to seek no farther, for he was the traitor; and feeling his life go away with the wound which Hamlet had given him, he made confession of the treachery he had used, and how he had fallen a victim to it: and he told Hamlet of the envenomed point, and said that Hamlet had not half an hour to live, for no medicine could cure him; and begging forgiveness of Hamlet, he died, with his last words accusing the king of being the contriver of the mischief. When Hamlet saw his end draw near, there being yet some venom left upon the sword, he suddenly turned upon his false uncle, and thrust the point of it to his heart, fulfilling the promise which he had made to his father's spirit, whose injunction was now accomplished, and his foul murder revenged upon the murderer. Then Hamlet, feeling his breath fail and life departing, turned to his dear friend Horatio, who had been spectator of this fatal tragedy; and with his dying breath requested him that he would live to tell his story to the world (for Horatio had made a motion as if he would slay himself to accompany the prince in death), and Horatio promised that he would make a true report, as one that was privy to all the circumstances. And, thus satisfied, the noble heart of Hamlet cracked: and Horatio and the bystanders with many tears commended the spirit of their sweet prince to the guardianship of angels. For Hamlet was a loving and a gentle prince, and greatly beloved for his many noble and prince-like qualities; and if he had lived, would no doubt have proved a most royal and complete king to Denmark.

# OTHELLO.

BRABANTIO, the rich senator of Venice, had a fair daughter, the gentle Desdemona. She was sought to by divers suitors, both on account of her many virtuous qualities, and for her rich expectations. But among the suitors of her own clime and complexion, she saw none whom she could affect: for this noble lady, who regarded the mind more than the features of men, with a singularity rather to be admired than imitated, had chose for the object of her affections a Moor, a black, whom her father loved, and often invited to his house.

Neither is Desdemona to be altogether condemned for the unsuitableness of the person whom she selected for her lover. Bating that Othello was black, the noble Moor wanted nothing which might recommend him to the affections of the greatest lady. He was a soldier, and a brave one; and by his conduct in bloody wars against the Turks, had risen to the rank of general in the Venetian service, and was esteemed and trusted by the state.

He had been a traveller, and Desdemona (as is the manner of ladies) loved to hear him tell the story of his adventures, which he would run through from his earliest recollection; the battles, sieges, and encounters which he had passed through; the perils he had been exposed to by land and by water; his hair-breadth escapes, when he has entered a breach, or marched up to the mouth of a cannon; and how he had been taken prisoner by the insolent enemy, and sold to slavery: how he demeaned himself in that state, and how he escaped: all these accounts, added to the narration of the strange things he had seen in foreign countries, the vast wildernesses and romantic caverns, the quarries, the rocks and mountains, whose heads are in the clouds; of the savage nations, the cannibals who are man-eaters, and a race of people in Africa whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders: these travellers' stories would so enchain the attention of Desdemona, that if she were called off at any time by household affairs, she would despatch with all haste that business, and return, and with a greedy ear devour Othello's discourse. And once he took advantage of a pliant hour, and drew from her a prayer, that he would tell her the whole story of his life at large, of which she had heard so much, but only by parts; to which he consented, and beguiled her of many a tear, when he spoke of some distressful stroke which his youth had suffered.

His story being done, she gave him for his pains a world of sighs: she swore a pretty oath that it was all passing strange, and pitiful, wondrous pitiful: she wished (she said) she had not heard it, yet she wished that heaven had made her such a man; and then she thanked him, and told him if he had a friend who loved her, he had only to teach him how to tell his story, and that would woo her. Upon this hint, delivered not with more frankness than modesty, accompanied with a certain bewitching prettiness, and blushes, which Othello could not but understand, he spoke more openly of his love, and in this golden opportunity gained the consent of the generous lady Desdemona privately to marry him.

Neither Othello's colour nor his fortune were such, that it could be hoped Brabantio would accept him for a son-in-law. He had left his daughter free; but he did expect that, as the manner of noble Venetian ladies was, she would choose ere long a husband of senatorial rank or expectations: but in this he

was deceived; Desdemona loved the Moor, though he was black, and devoted her heart and fortunes to his valiant parts and qualities: so was her heart subdued to an implicit devotion to the man she had selected for a husband, that his very colour, which to all but this discerning lady would have proved an insurmountable objection, was by her esteemed above all the white skins and clear complexions of the young Venetian nobility, her suitors.

Their marriage, which, though privately carried could not long be kept a secret, came to the ears of the old man, Brabantio, who appeared in a solemn council of the senate, as an accuser of the Moor Othello, who by spells and witchcraft (he maintained) had seduced the affections of the fair Desdemona to marry him, without the consent of her father, and against the obligations of hospitality.

At this juncture of time it happened that the state of Venice had immediate need of the services of Othello, news having arrived that the Turks with mighty preparation had fitted out a fleet, which was bending its course to the island of Cyprus, with intent to regain that strong post from the Venetians, who then held it. In this emergency the state turned its eyes upon Othello, who alone was deemed adequate to conduct the defence of Cyprus against the Turks. So that Othello, now summoned before the senate, stood in their presence at once as a canditate for a great state employment, and as a culprit charged with offences which by the laws of Venice were made capital.

The age and senatorial character of old Brabantio commanded a most patient hearing from that grave assembly; but the incensed father conducted his accusation with so much intemperance, producing likelihoods and allegations for proofs, that, when Othello was called upon for his defence, he had only to relate a plain tale of the course of his love; which he did with such an artless eloquence, recounting the whole story of his wooing, as we have related it above, and delivered his speech with so noble a plainness (the evidence of truth), that the duke, who sat as chief judge, could not help confessing, that a tale so told would have won his daughter too; and the spells and conjurations, which Othello had used in his courtship, plainly appeared to have been no more than the honest arts of men in love; and the only witchcraft which he had used, the faculty of telling a soft tale to win a lady's ear.

This statement of Othello was confirmed by the testimony of the lady Desdemona herself, who appeared in court, and professing a duty to her father for life and education, challenged leave of him to profess a yet higher duty to her lord and husband, even so much as her mother had shown in preferring him (Brabantio) above *her* father.

The old senator, unable to maintain his plea, called the Moor to him with many expressions of sorrow, and, as an act of necessity, bestowed upon him his daughter, whom, if he had been free to withhold her (he told him), he would with all his heart have kept from him; adding, that he was glad at soul that he had no other child, for this behaviour of Desdemona would have taught him to be a tyrant, and hang clogs on them, for her desertion.

This difficulty being got over, Othello, to whom custom had rendered the hardships of a military life as natural as food and rest are to other men, readily undertook the management of the wars in Cyprus; and Desdemona, preferring the honour of her lord (though with danger) before the indulgence of those idle delights in which new-married people usually waste their time, cheerfully consented to his going.

No sooner were Othello and his lady landed in Cyprus, than news arrived, that a desperate tempest had dispersed the Turkish fleet, and thus the island was secure from any immediate apprehension of an attack. But the war which Othello was to suffer was now beginning; and the enemies which malice stirred up against his innocent lady, proved in their nature more deadly than strangers or infidels.

Among all the general's friends no one possessed the confidence of Othello more entirely than Cassio. Michael Cassio was a young soldier, a Florentine, gay, amorous, and of pleasing address—favourite qualities with women; he was handsome, eloquent, and exactly such a person as might alarm the jealousy of a man advanced in years (as Othello in some measure was), who had married a young and beautiful wife: but Othello was as free from jealousy as he was noble, and as incapable of suspecting as of doing a base action. He had employed this Cassio in his love-affair with Desdemona, and Cassio had been a sort of go-between in his suit: for Othello, fearing that himself had not those soft parts of conversation which please ladies, and finding these qualities in his friend, would often depute Cassio to go (as he phrased it) a-courting for him; such innocent simplicity being rather an honour than a blemish to the character of the valiant Moor. So that no wonder, if next to Othello himself (but at far distance, as beseems a virtuous wife) the gentle Desdemona loved and trusted Cassio. Nor had the marriage of this couple made any difference in their behaviour to Michael Cassio. He frequented their house, and his free and rattling talk was no unpleasing variety to Othello, who was himself of a more serious temper: for such tempers are observed often to delight in their contraries, as a relief from the oppressive excess of their own; and Desdemona and Cassio would talk and laugh together, as in the days when he went a-courting for his friend.

Othello had lately promoted Cassio to be his lieutenant, a place of trust, and nearest to the general's person. This promotion gave great offence to Iago, an older officer, who thought he had a better claim than Cassio, and would often ridicule Cassio, as a fellow fit only for the company of ladies, and one that knew no more of the art of war, or how to set an army in array for battle, than a girl. Iago hated Cassio, and he hated Othello, as well for favouring Cassio, as for an unjust suspicion, which he had lightly taken up against Othello, that the Moor was too fond of Iago's wife Emilia. From these imaginary provocations, the plotting mind of Iago conceived a horrid scheme of revenge, which should involve Cassio, the Moor, and Desdemona in one common ruin.

Iago was artful, and had studied human nature deeply, and he knew that of all the torments which afflict the mind of man (and far beyond bodily torture), the pains of jealousy were the most intolerable, and had the sorest sting. If he could succeed in making Othello jealous of Cassio, he thought it would be an exquisite plot of revenge, and might end in the death of Cassio or Othello, or both; he cared not.

The arrival of the general and his lady in Cyprus, meeting with the news of the dispersion of the enemy's fleet, made a sort of holiday in the island. Everybody gave themselves up to feasting and making merry. Wine flowed in abundance, and cups went round to the health of the black Othello, and his lady the fair Desdemona.

Cassio had the direction of the guard that night, with a charge from Othello to keep the soldiers from excess in drinking, that no brawl might arise, to fright the inhabitants, or disgust them with the new-landed forces. That night Iago began his deep-laid plans of mischief; under colour of loyalty and love to the general, he enticed Cassio to make rather too free with the bottle (a great fault in an officer upon guard). Cassio for a time resisted, but he could not long hold out against the honest freedom which Iago knew how to put on, but kept swallowing glass after glass (as Iago still plied him with drink and encouraging songs), and Cassio's tongue ran over in praise of the lady Desdemona, whom he again and again toasted, affirming that she was a most exquisite lady: until at last the enemy which he had put into his mouth stole away his brains; and upon some provocation given him by a fellow whom Iago had set on, swords were drawn, and Montano, a worthy officer, who interfered to appease the dispute, was wounded in the scuffle. The riot now

began to be general, and Iago, who had set on foot the mischief, was foremost in spreading the alarm, causing the castle-bell to be rung (as if some dangerous mutiny instead of a slight drunken quarrel had arisen): the alarm-bell ringing awakened Othello, who, dressing in a hurry, and coming to the scene of action, questioned Cassio of the cause. Cassio was now come to himself, the effect of the wine having a little gone off, but was too much ashamed to reply; and Iago, pretending a great reluctance to accuse Cassio, but as it were forced into it by Othello, who insisted upon knowing the truth, gave an account of the whole matter (leaving out his own share in it, which Cassio was too far gone to remember) in such a manner as, while he seemed to make Cassio's offence less, did indeed make it appear greater than it was. The result was, that Othello, who was a strict observer of discipline, was compelled to take away Cassio's place of lieutenant from him.

Thus did Iago's first artifice succeed completely; he had now undermined his hated rival, and thrust him out of his place: but a further use was hereafter to be made of the adventure of this disastrous night.

Cassio, whom this misfortune had entirely sobered, now lamented to his seeming friend Iago that he should have been such a fool as to transform himself into a beast. He was undone, for how could he ask the general for his place again? he would tell him he was a drunkard. He despised himself. Iago, affecting to make light of it, said, that he, or any man living, might be drunk upon occasion; it remained now to make the best of a bad bargain; the general's wife was now the general, and could do anything with Othello; that he were best to apply to the lady Desdemona to mediate for him with her lord; that she was of a frank, obliging disposition, and would readily undertake a good office of this sort, and set Cassio right again in the general's favour; and then this crack in their love would be made stronger than ever. A good advice of Iago, if it had not been given for wicked purposes, which will after appear.

Cassio did as Iago advised him, and made application to the lady Desdemona, who was easy to be won over in any honest suit; and she promised Cassio that she would be his solicitor with her lord, and rather die than give up his cause. This she immediately set about in so earnest and pretty a manner, that Othello, who was mortally offended with Cassio, could not put her off. When he pleaded delay, and that it was too soon to pardon such an offender, sha would not be beat back, but insisted that it should be the next night, or the morning after, or the next morning to that at farthest. Then she showed how penitent and humbled poor Cassio was, and that his offence did not deserve so sharp a check. And when Othello still hung back, "What! my lord," said, she "that I should have so much to do to plead for Cassio, Michael Cassio, that came a-courting for you, and oftentimes, when I have spoken in dispraise of you, has taken your part! I count this but a little thing to ask of you. When I mean to try your love indeed, I shall ask a weighty matter." Othello could deny nothing to such a pleader, and only requesting that Desdemona would leave the time to him, promising to receive Michael Cassio again into favour.

It happened that Othello and Iago had entered into the room where Desdemona was, just as Cassio, who had been imploring her intercession, was departing at the opposite door; and Iago, who was full of art, said in a low voice, as if to himself, "I like not that." Othello took no great notice of what he said; indeed the conference which immediately took place with his lady put it out of his head; but he remembered it afterwards. For when Desdemona was gone, Iago, as if for mere satisfaction of his thought, questioned Othello whether Michael Cassio, when Othello was courting his lady, knew of his love. To this the general answering in the affirmative, and adding, that he had gone between them very often during the courtship, Iago knitted his brow, as if he

had got fresh light of some terrible matter, and cried, "Indeed!". This brought into Othello's mind the words which Iago had let fall upon entering the room, and seeing Cassio with Desdemona; and he began to think there was some meaning in all this: for he deemed Iago to be a just man, and full of love and honesty, and what in a false knave would be tricks, in him seemed to be the natural workings of an honest mind, big with something too full for utterance: and Othello prayed Iago to speak what he knew, and to give his worst thoughts words. "And what," said Iago, "if some thoughts very vile should have intruded into my breast, as where is the palace into which foul things do not enter?" Then Iago went on to say, what a pity it were, if any troubles should arise to Othello out of his imperfect observations; that it would not be for Othello's peace to know his thoughts; that people's good names were not to be taken away for slight suspicions; and when Othello's curiosity was raised almost to distraction with these hints and scattered words, Iago, as if in earnest care for Othello's peace of mind, besought him to beware of jealousy: with such art did this villain raise suspicions in the unguarded Othello, by the very caution which he pretended to give him against suspicion. "I know," said Othello, "that my wife is fair, loves company and feasting, is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well: but where virtue is, these qualities are virtuous. I must have proof before I think her dishonest." Then Iago, as if glad that Othello was slow to believe ill of his lady, frankly declared that he had no proof, but begged Othello to observe her behaviour well, when Cassio was by; not to be jealous nor too secure neither, for that he (Iago) knew the dispositions of the Italian ladies, his countrywomen, better than Othello could do; and that in Venice the wives let heaven see many pranks they dared not show their husbands. Then he artfully insinuated that Desdemona deceived her father in marrying with Othello, and carried it so closely that the poor old man thought that witchcraft had been used. Othello was much moved with this argument, which brought the matter home to him; for if she had deceived her father, why might she not deceive her husband?

Iago begged pardon for having moved him; but Othello, assuming an indifference, while he was really shaken with inward grief at Iago's words, begged him to go on, which Iago did with many apologies, as if unwilling to produce anything against Cassio, whom he called his friend: he then came strongly to the point, and reminded Othello how Desdemona had refused many suitable matches of her own clime and complexion, and had married him, a Moor, which showed unnatural in her, and proved her to have a headstrong will; and when her better judgment returned, how probable it was she should fall upon comparing Othello with the fine forms and clear white complexions of the young Italians her countrymen. He concluded with advising Othello to put off his reconcilement with Cassio a little longer, and in the meanwhile to note with what earnestness Desdemona should intercede in his behalf; for that much would be seen in that. So mischievously did this artful villain lay his plots to turn the gentle qualities of this innocent lady into her destruction, and make a net for her out of her own goodness to entrap her: first setting Cassio on to entreat her mediation, and then out of that very mediation contriving stratagems for her ruin.

The conference ended with Iago's begging Othello to account his wife innocent until he had more decisive proof; and Othello promised to be patient: but from that moment the deceived Othello never tasted content of mind. Poppy, nor the juice of mandragora, nor all the sleeping potions in the world, could ever again restore to him that sweet sleep which he had enjoyed but yesterday. His occupation sickened opon him. He no longer took delight in arms. His heart, that used to be roused at the sight of troops, and banners, and battle-array, and would stir and leap at the sound of a drum, or a trumpet, or a neighing war-horse, seemed to have lost all that pride and ambition which

are a soldier's virtue; and his military ardour and all his old joys forsook him. Sometimes he thought his wife honest, and at times he thought her not so; sometimes he thought Iago just, and at times he thought him not so; then he would wish that he had never known of it; he was not the worse for her loving Cassio, so long as he knew it not: torn in pieces with these distracting thoughts, he once laid hold of Iago's throat, and demanded proof of Desdemona's guilt, or threatened instant death for his having belied her. Iago, feigning indignation that his honesty should be taken for a vice, asked Othello if he had not sometimes seen a hankerchief spotted with strawberries in his wife's hand. Othello answered, that he had given her such a one; and that it was his first gift. "That same handkerchief," said Iago, "did I see Michael Cassio this day wipe his face with." "If it be as you say," said Othello, "I will not rest till a wide revenge swallow them up: and first, for a token of your fidelity, I expect that Cassio shall be put to death within three days; and for that fair devil [meaning his lady], I will withdraw and devise some swift means of death for her."

Trifles, light as air, are to the jealous proofs as strong as holy writ. A handkerchief of his wife's seen in Cassio's hand, was motive enough to the deluded Othello to pass sentence of death upon them both, without once inquiring how Cassio came by it. Desdemona had never given such a present to Cassio, nor would this constant lady have wronged her lord with doing so naughty a thing as giving his presents to another man; both Cassio and Desdemona were innocent of any offence against Othello: but the wicked Iago, whose spirits never slept in contrivance of villany, had made his wife (a good, but a weak woman) steal this handkerchief from Desdemona, under pretence of getting the work copied, but in reality to drop it in Cassio's way, where he might find it, and give a handle to Iago's suggestion that it was Desdemona's present.

Othello, soon after meeting his wife, pretended that he had a headache (as he might indeed with truth), and desired her to lend him her handkerchief to hold to his temples. She did so. "Not this," said Othello, "but that handkerchief I gave you." Desdemona had it not about her (for indeed it was stolen as we have related). "How!" said Othello, "this is a fault indeed. That handkerchief an Egyptian woman gave to my mother; the woman was a witch, and could read people's thoughts: she told my mother, while she kept it, it would make her amiable, and my father should love her; but if she lost it, or gave it away, my father's fancy would turn, and he would loathe her as much as he had loved her. She dying gave it me, and bade me, if I ever married, to give it to my wife. I did so; take heed of it. Make it a darling as precious as your eye." "Is it possible?" said the frighted lady. "'Tis true," continued Othello; "it is a magical handkerchief; a sibyl that had lived in the world two hundred years, in a fit of prophetic fury worked it; the silkworms that furnished the silk were hallowed, and it was dyed in mummy of maidens' hearts conserved." Desdemona, hearing the wondrous virtues of the handkerchief, was ready to die with fear, for she plainly perceived she had lost it, and with it, she feared, the affections of her husband. Then Othello started, and looked as if he were going to do some rash thing, and still he demanded the handkerchief, which when she could not produce, she tried to divert her husband from too serious thoughts, and cheerfully told him she saw all his talk about the handkerchief was only to put off from her suit about Michael Cassio, whom she went on to praise (as Iago had foretold), till Othello in perfect distraction burst out of the room, and then Desdemona, though unwillingly, began to suspect her lord was jealous.

What cause she could have ministered to him she knew not, and then she accused herself for accusing the noble Othello, and thought to be sure that some untoward news from Venice, or some state troubles, had puddled his

spirits, and made his temper not so sweet as formerly. And she said, "Men are not gods, and we must not look for that observance from them when they are married which they show us on the bridal day." And she beshrewed herself for so unkindly judging of his unkindness.

Again Othello and Desdemona met, and he accused her more plainly of being unfaithful, and of loving another man, but he did not name whom: and Othello wept, and Desdemona said, "Alas! the heavy day! why do you weep?" And Othello told her he could have borne all sorts of evils with fortitude—poverty, and disease, and disgrace; but her infidelity had broken his heart: and he called her a weed, that looked so fair, and smelled so sweet, that the sense ached at it; and wished she had never been born. And when he had left her, this innocent lady was so stupefied with wonder at her lord's untrue suspicion of her, that a weight like sleep came over her, and she only desired her attendant to make her bed, and to lay her wedding sheets upon it, saying, that when people teach their babes, they do it by gentle means and easy tasks, and Othello might have chid her so, for in good faith she was but a child when she was chidden. And this was all the complaint which this gentle lady made.

Desdemona being retired to bed, expecting her lord would follow her, soon fell into a slumber, the effect of her troubled spirits, when Othello entered the chamber, full of the black purpose which he had meditated of putting his lady to death. But when he saw her asleep, he thought he would not shed her blood, nor scar that white skin of hers, more white than alabaster. But he was resolved she should die, else (as he said) she would live to betray more men, as she had done him. Then he kissed her for the last time (as he said), and that kiss was so sweet he must needs kiss her again: and he wept, but he said they were cruel tears.

Desdemona was awakened with his kisses, and she looked upon Othello, and she saw him gnaw his under-lip, and roll his eyes, and she knew he was always fatal when he looked so: and he bade her prepare for death, and to say her prayers, for he would not kill her soul. And this innocent wife, as she lay at his mercy, begged for compassion, and to know her fault, and then he named Cassio, and the handkerchief which (he said) she had given him: and as the guiltless lady was proceeding to clear herself, he suddenly would hear no more, but covering her up in the bed-clothes, stifled her till she died.

In this instant of time was brought into the house Cassio, wounded and bleeding, whom Iago had set one of his creatures on to assassinate; but the fellow not succeeding in his attempt to kill Cassio (whom he wounded, but not mortally), and being himself killed by Iago to prevent discovery, in his pockets were found certain letters, which made the guilt of Iago, and the innocence of Cassio, clear beyond all doubt; and Cassio now came to beg pardon of Othello, and to ask wherein he had offended him that he had employed Iago to murder him.

This discovery was a thunderstroke to Othello, who now plainly saw that he was no better than a murderer, and that his wife (poor innocent lady) had been ever faithful to him, the extreme anguish of which discovery making life insupportable, he fell upon his sword, and throwing himself upon the body of his dear injured lady, expired.

These rash acts raised much passion of horror and amazement in the bystanders, for Othello had borne a fair reputation, and till he was wrought upon by the arts of a villain, which his own noble nature never gave him leave to suspect, he was a loving and a doting husband. He had loved, not wisely, but too well; and his manly eyes (when he learned his mistake), though not used to weep on every small occasion, dropped tears as fast as the Arabian trees their gum. And when he was dead, all his former merits and his valiant acts were remembered. Nothing now remained for his successor but to put

the utmost censure of the law in force against Iago, who was executed with strict tortures, and to send word to the state of Venice of the lamentable death of their renowned general.

# The Adventures of Ulysses.

[As a four shilling duodecimo, of 148 pages, "The Adventures of Ulysses" was originally published in 1808, at the Juvenile Library, 41, Skinner Street, having been printed in Shoe Lane, by R. and A. Taylor. A classical vignette, designed by Corbould, and engraved by Charles Heath, adorned the title page. Writing long afterwards in a letter to Bernard Barton, "You like the Odyssey," Charles Lamb asked his correspondent, "Did you ever read my 'Adventures of Ulysses,' founded on Chapman's old translation for children or men?" adding in the same breath, "Chapman is divine; and my abridgment has not quite emptied him of his divinity."]

THIS work is designed as a supplement to the "Adventures of Telemachus." It treats of the conduct and sufferings of Ulysses, the father of Telemachus. The picture which it exhibits is that of a brave man struggling with adversity; by a wise use of events, and with an inimitable presence of mind under difficulties, forcing out a way for himself through the severest trials to which human life can be exposed; with enemies natural and preternatural surrounding him on all sides. The agents in this tale, besides men and women, are giants, enchanters, sirens: things which denote external force or internal temptations, the twofold danger which a wise fortitude must expect to encounter in its course through this world. The fictions contained in it will be found to comprehend some of the most admired inventions of Grecian mythology.

The ground-work of the story is as old as the Odyssey, but the moral and the colouring are comparatively modern. By avoiding the prolixity which marks the speeches and the descriptions in Homer, I have gained a rapidity to the narration which I hope will make it more attractive and give it more the air of a romance to young readers, though I am sensible that by the curtailment I have sacrificed in many places the manners to the passion, the subordinate characteristics to the essential interest of the story. The attempt is not to be considered as seeking a comparison with any of the direct translations of the Odyssey, either in prose or verse, though if I were to state the obligations which I have had to one obsolete version,* I should have run the hazard of depriving myself of the very slender degree of reputation which I could hope to acquire from a trifle like the present undertaking.

## CHAPTER I.

The Cicons. The Fruit of the Lotos-Tree. Polyphemus and the Cyclops. The Kingdom of the Winds, and God Æolus's Fatal Present. The Læstrygonian Man-eaters.

THIS history tells of the wanderings of Ulysses and his followers in their return from Troy, after the destruction of that famous city of Asia by the Grecians. He was inflamed with a desire of seeing again, after a ten years'

* The translation of Homer by Chapman in the reign of James I.

absence, his wife and native country Ithaca. He was king of a barren spot, and a poor country, in comparison of the fruitful plains of Asia which he was leaving, or the wealthy kingdoms which he touched upon in his return; yet wherever he came, he could never see a soil which appeared in his eyes half so sweet or desirable as his country earth. This made him refuse the offers of the goddess Calypso to stay with her, and partake of her immortality, in the delightful island: and this gave him strength to break from the enchantments of Circe, the daughter of the Sun.

From Troy ill winds cast Ulysses and his fleet upon the coast of the Cicons, a people hostile to the Grecians. Landing his forces, he laid siege to their chief city Ismarus, which he took, and with it much spoil, and slew many people. But success proved fatal to him; for his soldiers elated with the spoil, and the good store of provisions which they found in that place, fell to eating and drinking, forgetful of their safety, till the Cicons, who inhabited the coast, had time to assemble their friends and allies from the interior, who mustering in prodigious force, set upon the Grecians, while they negligently revelled and feasted, and slew many of them and recovered the spoil. They, dispirited and thinned in their numbers, with difficulty made their retreat good to the ships.

Thence they set sail, sad at heart, yet something cheered that with such fearful odds against them they had not all been utterly destroyed. A dreadful tempest ensued, which for two nights and two days tossed them about, but the third day the weather cleared, and they had hopes of a favourable gale to carry them to Ithaca; but as they doubled the Cape of Malea, suddenly a north wind arising, drove them back as far as Cythera. After that, for the space of nine days, contrary winds continued to drive them in an opposite direction to the point to which they were bound, and the tenth day they put in at a shore where a race of men dwell that are sustained by the fruit of the lotos-tree. Here Ulysses sent some of his men to land for fresh water, who were met by certain of the inhabitants, that gave them some of their country food to eat; not with any ill intention towards them, though in the event it proved pernicious; for, having eaten of this fruit, so pleasant it proved to their appetite, that they in a minute quite forgot all thoughts of home, or of their countrymen, or of ever returning back to the ships to give an account of what sort of inhabitants dwelt there, but they would needs stay and live there among them, and eat of that precious food for ever; and when Ulysses sent other of his men to look for them, and to bring them back by force, they strove, and wept, and would not leave their food for heaven itself, so much the pleasure of that enchanting fruit had bewitched them. But Ulysses caused them to be bound hand and foot, and cast under the hatches; and set sail with all possible speed from that baneful coast, lest others after them might taste the lotos, which had such strange qualities to make men forget their native country, and the thoughts of home.

Coasting on all that night by unknown and out of the way shores, they came by day-break to the land where the Cyclops dwell, a sort of giant shepherds that neither sow nor plough, but the earth untilled produces for them rich wheat and barley and grapes, yet they have neither bread nor wine, nor know the arts of cultivation, nor care to know them: for they live each man to himself, without laws or government, or anything like a state or kingdom, but their dwellings are in caves, on the steep heads of mountains, every man's household governed by his own caprice, or not governed at all, their wives and children as lawless as themselves, none caring for others, but each doing as he or she thinks good. Ships or boats they have none, nor artificers to make them, no trade or commerce, or wish to visit other shores; yet they have convenient places for harbours and for shipping. Here Ulysses with a chosen party of twelve followers landed, to explore what sort of men dwelt there, whether

hospitable and friendly to strangers, or altogether wild and savage, for as yet no dwellers appeared in sight.

The first sign of habitation which they came to was a giant's cave rudely fashioned, but of a size which betokened the vast proportions of its owner, the pillars which supported it being the bodies of huge oaks or pines, in the natural state of the tree, and all about showed more marks of strength than skill in whoever built it. Ulysses, entering in, admired the savage contrivances and artless structure of the place, and longed to see the tenant of so outlandish a mansion; but well conjecturing that gifts would have more avail in extracting courtesy, than strength could succeed in forcing it, from such a one as he expected to find the inhabitant, he resolved to flatter his hospitality with a present of Greek wine, of which he had store in twelve great vessels; so strong that no one ever drank it without an infusion of twenty parts of water to one of wine, yet the fragrance of it even then so delicious, that it would have vexed a man who smelled it to abstain from tasting it; but whoever tasted it, it was able to raise his courage to the height of heroic deeds. Taking with them a goatskin flagon full of this precious liquor, they ventured into the recesses of the cave. Here they pleased themselves a whole day with beholding the giant's kitchen, where the flesh of sheep and goats lay strewed, his dairy where goat-milk stood ranged in troughs and pails, his pens where he kept his live animals; but those he had driven forth to pasture with him when he went out in the morning. While they were feasting their eyes with a sight of these curiosities, their ears were suddenly deafened with a noise like the falling of a house. It was the owner of the cave who had been abroad all day feeding his flock, as his custom was, in the mountains, and now drove them home in the evening from pasture. He threw down a pile of fire-wood, which he had been gathering against supper-time, before the mouth of the cave, which occasioned the crash they heard. The Grecians hid themselves in the remote parts of the cave, at sight of the uncouth monster. It was Polyphemus, the largest and savagest of the Cyclops, who boasted himself to be the son of Neptune. He looked more like a mountain crag than a man, and to his brutal body he had a brutish mind answerable. He drove his flock, all that gave milk, to the interior of the cave, but left the rams and the he-goats without. Then taking up a stone so massy that twenty oxen could not have drawn it, he placed it at the mouth of the cave, to defend the entrance, and sat him down to milk his ewes and his goats; which done, he lastly kindled a fire, and throwing his great eye round the cave (for the Cyclops have no more than one eye, and that placed in the midst of their forehead), by the glimmering light he discerned some of Ulysses's men.

"Ho, guests, what are you? merchants or wandering thieves?" he bellowed out in a voice which took from them all power of reply, it was so astounding.

Only Ulysses summoned resolution to answer, that they came neither for plunder nor traffic, but were Grecians who had lost their way, returning from Troy; which famous city, under the conduct of Agamemnon, the renowned son of Atreus, they had sacked, and laid level with the ground. Yet now they prostrated themselves humbly before his feet, whom they acknowledged to be mightier than they, and besought him that he would bestow the rites of hospitality upon them, for that Jove was the avenger of wrongs done to strangers, and would fiercely resent any injury which they might suffer.

"Fool," said the Cyclop, "to come so far to preach to me the fear of the gods. We Cyclops care not for your Jove, whom you fable to be nursed by a goat, nor any of your blessed ones. We are stronger than they, and dare bid open battle to Jove himself, though you and all your fellows of the earth join with him." And he bade them tell him where their ship was, in which they came, and whether they had any companions. But Ulysses, with a wise caution, made answer, that they had no ship or companions, but were unfortunate men whom the sea, splitting their ship in pieces, had dashed upon his

coast, and they alone had escaped. He replied nothing, but gripping two of the nearest of them, as if they had been no more than children, he dashed their brains out against the earth, and (shocking to relate) tore in pieces their limbs, and devoured them, yet warm and trembling, making a lion's meal of them, lapping the blood: for the Cyclops are *man-eaters*, and esteem human flesh to be a delicacy far above goat's or kid's; though by reason of their abhorred customs few men approach their coast except some stragglers, or now and then a shipwrecked mariner. At a sight so horrid Ulysses and his men were like distracted people. He, when he had made an end of his wicked supper, drained a draught of goat's milk down his prodigious throat, and lay down and slept among his goats. Then Ulysses drew his sword, and half resolved to thrust it with all his might in at the bosom of the sleeping monster; but wiser thoughts restrained him, else they had there without help all perished, for none but Polyphemus himself could have removed that mass of stone which he had placed to guard the entrance. So they were constrained to abide all that night in fear.

When day came the Cyclop awoke, and kindling a fire, made his breakfast of two other of his unfortunate prisoners, then milked his goats as he was accustomed, and pushing aside the vast stone, and shutting it again when he had done, upon the prisoners, with as much ease as a man opens and shuts a quiver's lid, he let out his flock, and drove them before him with whistlings (as sharp as winds in storms) to the mountains.

Then Ulysses, of whose strength or cunning the Cyclop seems to have had as little heed as of an infant's, being left alone, with the remnant of his men which the Cyclop had not devoured, gave manifest proof how far manly wisdom excels brutish force. He chose a stake from among the wood which the Cyclop had piled up for firing, in length and thickness like a mast, which he sharpened and hardened in the fire, and selected four men, and instructed them what they should do with this stake, and made them perfect in their parts.

When the evening was come, the Cyclop drove home his sheep; and as fortune directed it, either of purpose, or that his memory was overruled by the gods to his hurt (as in the issue it proved), he drove the males of his flock, contrary to his custom, along with the dams into the pens. Then shutting-to the stone of the cave, he fell to his horrible supper. When he had despatched two more of the Grecians, Ulysses waxed bold with the contemplation of his project, and took a bowl of Greek wine, and merrily dared the Cyclop to drink.

"Cyclop," he said, "take a bowl of wine from the hand of your guest; it may serve to digest the man's flesh that you have eaten, and show what drink our ship held before it went down. All I ask in recompense, if you find it good, is to be dismissed in a whole skin. Truly you must look to have few visitors, if you observe this new custom of eating your guests."

The brute took and drank, and vehemently enjoyed the taste of wine, which was new to him, and swilled again at the flagon, and entreated for more, and prayed Ulysses to tell him his name, that he might bestow a gift upon the man who had given him such brave liquor. The Cyclops (he said) had grapes, but this rich juice (he swore) was simply divine. Again Ulysses plied him with the wine, and the fool drank it as fast as he poured out, and again he asked the name of his benefactor, which Ulysses cunningly dissembling, said. "My name is Noman: my kindred and friends in my own country call me Noman." "Then," said the Cyclop, "this is the kindness I will show thee Noman: I will eat thee last of all thy friends." He had scarce expressed his savage kindness, when the fumes of the strong wine overcame him, and he reeled down upon the floor and sank into a dead sleep.

Ulysses watched his time, while the monster lay insensible, and heartening up his men, they placed the sharp end of the stake in the fire till it was heated

red-hot, and some god gave them a courage beyond that which they were used to have, and the four men with difficulty bored the sharp end of the huge stake, which they had heated red-hot, right into the eye of the drunken cannibal, and Ulysses helped to thrust it in with all his might, still farther and farther, with effort, as men bore with an auger, till the scalded blood gushed out, and the eye-ball smoked, and the strings of the eye cracked, as the burning rafter broke in it, and the eye hissed, as hot iron hisses when it is plunged into water.

He waking, roared with the pain so loud that all the cavern broke into claps like thunder. They fled, and dispersed into corners. He plucked the burning stake from his eye, and hurled the wood madly about the cave. Then he cried out with a mighty voice for his brethren the Cyclops, that dwelt hard by in caverns upon hills; they hearing the terrible shout came flocking from all parts to inquire what ailed Polyphemus? and what cause he had for making such horrid clamours in the night-time to break their sleeps? if his fright proceeded from any mortal? if strength or craft had given him his death's blow? He made answer from within that Noman had hurt him, Noman had killed him, Noman was with him in the cave. They replied, "If no man has hurt thee, and no man is with thee, then thou art alone, and the evil that afflicts thee is from the hand of heaven, which none can resist or help." So they left him and went their way, thinking that some disease troubled him. He, blind and ready to split with the anguish of the pain, went groaning up and down in the dark, to find the doorway, which when he found, he removed the stone, and sat in the threshold, feeling if he could lay hold on any man going out with the sheep, which (the day now breaking) were beginning to issue forth to their accustomed pastures. But Ulysses, whose first artifice in giving himself that ambiguous name, had succeeded so well with the Cyclop, was not of a wit so gross to be caught by that palpable device. But casting about in his mind all the ways which he could contrive for escape (no less than all their lives depending on the success), at last he thought of this expedient. He made knots of the osier twigs upon which the Cyclop commonly slept, with which he tied the fattest and fleeciest of the rams together, three in a rank, and under the belly of the middle ram he tied a man, and himself last, wrapping himself fast with both his hands in the rich wool of one, the fairest of the flock.

And now the sheep began to issue forth very fast; the males went first, the females unmilked stood by, bleating and requiring the hand of their shepherd in vain to milk them, their full bags sore with being unemptied, but he much sorer with the loss of sight. Still as the males passed, he felt the backs of those fleecy fools, never dreaming that they carried his enemies under their bellies: so they passed on till the last ram came loaded with his wool and Ulysses together. He stopped that ram and felt him, and had his hand once in the hair of Ulysses, yet knew it not, and he chid the ram for being last, and spoke to it as if it understood him, and asked it whether it did not wish that its master had his eye again, which that abominable Noman with his execrable rout had put out, when they had got him down with wine; and he willed the ram to tell him whereabouts in the cave his enemy lurked, that he might dash his brains and strew them about, to ease his heart of that tormenting revenge which rankled in it. After a deal of such foolish talk to the beast he let it go.

When Ulysses found himself free, he let go his hold, and assisted in disengaging his friends. The rams which had befriended them they carried off with them to the ships, where their companions with tears in their eyes received them, as men escaped from death. They plied their oars, and set their sails, and when they were got as far off from shore as a voice would reach, Ulysses cried out to the Cyclop: "Cyclop, thou should'st not have so much abused thy

monstrous strength, as to devour thy guests. Jove by my hand sends thee requital to pay thy savage inhumanity." The Cyclop heard, and came forth enraged, and in his anger he plucked a fragment of a rock, and threw it with blind fury at the ships: it narrowly escaped lighting upon the bark in which Ulysses sat, but with the fall it raised so fierce an ebb, as bore back the ship till it almost touched the shore. "Cyclop," said Ulysses, "if any ask thee who imposed on thee that unsightly blemish in thine eye, say it was Ulysses, son of Laertes: the king of Ithaca am I called, the waster of cities." Then they crowded sail, and beat the old sea, and forth they went with a forward gale; sad for fore-past losses, yet glad to have escaped at any rate; till they came to the isle where Æolus reigned, who is god of the winds.

Here Ulysses and his men were courteously received by the monarch, who showed him his twelve children which have rule over the twelve winds. A month they stayed and feasted with him, and at the end of the month he dismissed them with many presents, and gave to Ulysses at parting an ox's hide, in which were inclosed *all the winds:* only he left abroad the western wind, to play upon their sails and waft them gently home to Ithaca. This bag bound in a glittering silver band, so close that no breath could escape, Ulysses hung up at the mast. His companions did not know its contents, but guessed that the monarch had given to him some treasures of gold or silver.

Nine days they sailed smoothly, favoured by the western wind, and by the tenth they approached so nigh as to discern lights kindled on the shores of their country earth; when by ill fortune, Ulysses, overcome with fatigue of watching the helm, fell asleep. The mariners seized the opportunity, and one of them said to the rest: "A fine time has this leader of ours: wherever he goes he is sure of presents, when we come away empty-handed; and see, what king Æolus has given him, store no doubt of gold and silver." A word was enough to those covetous wretches, who quick as thought untied the bag, and instead of gold, out rushed with mighty noise *all the winds.* Ulysses with the noise awoke and saw their mistake, but too late, for the ship was driving with all the winds back far from Ithaca, far as to the island of Æolus from which they had parted, in one hour measuring back what in nine days they had scarcely tracked, and in sight of home too! Up he flew amazed, and raving doubted whether he should not fling himself into the sea for grief of his bitter disappointment. At last he hid himself under the hatches for shame. And scarce could he be prevailed upon, when he was told he was arrived again in the harbour of king Æolus, to go himself or send to that monarch for a second succour; so much the disgrace of having misused his royal bounty (though it was the crime of his followers and not his own) weighed upon him: and when at last he went, and took a herald with him, and came where the god sat on his throne, feasting with his children, he would not trust in among them at their meat, but set himself down like one unworthy in the threshold.

Indignation seized Æolus to behold him in that manner returned; and he said, "Ulysses, what has brought you back? are you so soon tired of your country? or did not our present please you? we thought we had given you a kingly passport." Ulysses made answer; "My men have done this ill mischief to me: they did it while I slept." "Wretch" said Æolus, "avaunt, and quit our shores: it fits not us to convoy men whom the gods hate, and will have perish."

Forth they sailed, but with far different hopes than when they left the same harbour the first time with all the winds confined, only the west-wind suffered to play upon their sails to waft them in gentle murmurs to Ithaca. They were now the sport of every gale that blew, and despaired of ever seeing home more. Now those covetous mariners were cured of their surfeit for gold, and would not have touched it if it had lain in untold heaps before them.

Six days and nights they drove along, and on the seventh day they put in to Lamos, a port of the Læstrygonians. So spacious this harbour was, that it held with ease all their fleet, which rode at anchor, safe from any storms, all but the ship in which Ulysses was embarked. He, as if prophetic of the mischance which followed, kept still without the harbour, making fast his bark to a rock at the land's point, which he climbed with purpose to survey the country. He saw a city with smoke ascending from the roofs, but neither ploughs going, nor oxen yoked, nor any sign of agricultural works. Making choice of two men, he sent them to the city to explore what sort of inhabitants dwelt there. His messengers had not gone far before they met a damsel, of stature surpassing human, who was coming to draw water from a spring. They asked her who dwelt in that land. She made no reply, but led them in silence to her father's palace. He was a monarch and named Antiphas. He and all his people were giants. When they entered the palace, a woman, the mother of the damsel, but far taller than she, rushed abroad and called for Antiphas. He came, and snatching up one of the two men, made as if he would devour him. The other fled. Antiphas raised a mighty shout, and instantly, this way and that, multitudes of gigantic people issued out at the gates, and making for the harbour, tore up huge pieces of the rocks, and flung them at the ships which lay there, all which they utterly overwhelmed and sank; and the unfortunate bodies of men which floated, and which the sea did not devour, these cannibals thrust through with harpooas, like fishes, and bore them off to their dire feast. Ulysses with his single bark that had never entered the harbour escaped; that bark which was now the only vessel left of all the gallant navy that had set sail with him from Troy. He pushed off from the shore, cheering the sad remnant of his men, whom horror at the sight of their countrymen's fate had almost turned to marble.

## CHAPTER II.

The house of Circe. Men changed into beasts. The voyage to hell. The banquet o. the dead.

On went the single ship till it came to the island of Ææa, where Circe the dreadful daughter of the Sun dwelt. She was deeply skilled in magic, a haughty beauty, and had hair like the Sun. The Sun was her parent, and begot her and her brother Æætes (such another as herself) upon Perse, daughter to Oceanus.

Here a dispute arose among Ulysses' men, which of them should go ashore and explore the country; for there was a necessity that some should go to procure water and provisions, their stock of both being nigh spent: but their hearts failed them when they called to mind the shocking fate of their fellows whom the Læstrygonians had eaten, and those which the foul Cyclop Polyphemus had crushed between his jaws; which moved them so tenderly in the recollection that they wept. But tears never yet supplied any man's wants this Ulysses knew full well, aud dividing his men (all that were left) into two companies, at the head of one of which was himself, and at the head of the other Eurylochus, a man of tried courage, he cast lots which of them should go up into the country; and the lot fell upon Eurylochus and his company, two and twenty in number; who took their leave, with tears, of Ulysses and his men that stayed, whose eyes wore the same wet badges of weak humanity, for they surely thought never to see these their companions again, but that on every coast where they should come, they should find nothing but savages and cannibals.

Eurylochus and his party proceeded up the country, till in a dale they

descried the house of Circe, built of bright stone, by the road's side. Before her gate lay many beasts, as wolves, lions, leopards, which, by her art, of wild, she had rendered tame. These arose when they saw strangers, and ramped upon their hinder paws, and fawned upon Eurylochus and his men, who dreaded the effects of such monstrous kindness; and staying at the gate they heard the enchantress within, sitting at her loom, singing such strains as suspended all mortal faculties, while she wove a web, subtle and glorious, and of texture inimitable on earth, as all the housewiferies of the deities are. Strains so ravishingly sweet, provoked even the sagest and prudentest heads among the party to knock and call at the gate. The shining gate the enchantress opened, and bade them come in and feast. They unwise followed, all but Eurylochus, who stayed without the gate, suspicious that some train was laid for them. Being entered, she placed them in chairs of state, and set before them meal and honey, and Symrna wine; but mixed with baneful drugs of powerful enchantment. When they had eaten of these, and drunk of her cup, she touched them with her charming-rod, and straight they were transformed into swine, having the bodies of swine, the bristles, and snout, and grunting noise of that animal; only they still retained the minds of men, which made them the more to lament their brutish transformation. Having changed them, she shut them up in her sty with many more whom her wicked sorceries had formerly changed, and gave them swine's food, mast, and acorns, and chestnuts, to eat.

Eurylochus, who beheld nothing of these sad changes from where he wa stationed without the gate, only instead of his companions that entered (who he thought had all vanished by witchcraft) beheld a herd of swine, hurried back to the ship, to give an account of what he had seen: but so frightened and perplexed, that he could give no distinct report of anything, only he remembered a palace, and a woman singing at her work, and gates guarded by lions. But his companions, he said, were all vanished.

Then Ulysses suspecting some foul witchcraft, snatched his sword, and his bow, and commanded Eurylochus instantly to lead him to the place. But Eurylochus fell down, and embracing his knees, besought him by the name of a man whom the gods had in their protection, not to expose his safety, and the safety of them all, to certain destruction.

"Do thou then stay, Eurylochus!" answered Ulysses: "eat thou and drink in the ship in safety; while I go alone upon this adventure: necessity, from whose law is no appeal, compels me."

So saying he quitted the ship and went on shore, accompanied by none; none had the hardihood to offer to partake that perilous adventure with him, so much they dreaded the enchantments of the witch. Singly he pursued his journey till he came to the shining gates which stood before her mansion: but when he essayed to put his foot over her threshold, he was suddenly stopped by the apparition of a young man, bearing a golden rod in his hand, who was the god Mercury. He held Ulysses by the wrist, to stay his entrance; and "Whither wouldest thou go?" he said; "O, thou most erring of the sons of men! knowest thou not that this is the house of great Circe, where she keeps thy friends in a loathsome sty, changed from the fair forms of men into the detestable and ugly shapes of swine? art thou prepared to share their fate, from which nothing can ransom thee?" But neither his words, nor his coming from heaven, could stop the daring foot of Ulysses, whom compassion for the misfortune of his friends had rendered careless of danger: which when the god perceived, he had pity to see valour so misplaced, and gave him the flower of the herb *moly*, which is sovereign against enchantments. The moly is a small unsightly root, its virtues but little known, and in low estimation; the dull shepherd treads on it every day with his clouted shoes: but it bears a small white flower, which is medicinal against charms, blights, mildews, and

damps.—"Take this in thy hand," said Mercury, "and with it boldly enter her gates: when she shall strike thee with her rod, thinking to change thee, as she has changed thy friends, boldly rush in upon her with thy sword, and extort from her the dreadful oath of the gods, that she will use no enchantments against thee: then force her to restore thy abused companions." He gave Ulysses the little white flower, and instructing him how to use it, vanished.

When the god was departed, Ulysses with loud knockings beat at the gate of the palace. The shining gates were opened, as before, and great Circe with hospitable cheer invited in her guest. She placed him on a throne with more distinction than she had used to his fellows, she mingled wine in a costly bowl, and he drank of it, mixed with those poisonous drugs. When he had drunk, she struck him with her charming-rod, and "To your sty," she cried; "out, swine; mingle with your companions." But those powerful words were not proof against the preservative which Mercury had given to Ulysses; he remained unchanged, and as the god had directed him, boldly charged the witch with his sword, as if he meant to take her life: which when she saw, and perceived that her charms were weak against the antidote which Ulysses bore about him, she cried out and bent her knees beneath his sword, embracing his, and said, "Who or what manner of man art thou? Never drank any man before thee of this cup, but he repented it in some brute's form. Thy shape remains unaltered as thy mind. Thou canst be none other than Ulysses, renowned above all the world for wisdom, whom the fates have long since decreed that I must love. This haughty bosom bends to thee. O Ithacan, a goddess woos thee to her bed."

"O Circe," he replied, "how canst thou treat of love or marriage with one whose friends thou has turned into beasts? and now offerest him thy hand in wedlock, only that thou mightest have him in thy power, to live the life of a beast with thee, naked, effeminate, subject to thy will, perhaps to be advanced in time to the honour of a place in thy sty. What pleasure canst thou promise, which may tempt the soul of a reasonable man? thy meats, spiced with poison; or thy wines, drugged with death? Thou must swear to me, that thou wilt never attempt against me the treasons which thou hast practised upon my friends." The enchantress, won by the terror of his threats, or by the violence of that new love which she felt kindling in her veins for him, swore by Styx, the great oath of the gods, that she meditated no injury to him. Then Ulysses made show of gentler treatment, which gave her hopes of inspiring him with a passion equal to that which she felt. She called her handmaids, four that served her in chief, who were daughters to her silver fountains, to her sacred rivers, and to her consecrated woods, to deck her apartments, to spread rich carpets, and set out her silver tables with dishes of the purest gold, and meat as precious as that which the gods eat, to entertain her guest. One brought water to wash his feet, and one brought wine to chase away, with a refreshing sweetness, the sorrows that had come of late so thick upon him and hurt his noble mind. They strewed perfumes on his head, and after he had bathed in a bath of the choicest aromatics, they brought him rich and costly apparel to put on. Then he was conducted to a throne of massy silver, and a regale, fit for Jove when he banquets, was placed before him. But the feast which Ulysses desired was to see his friends (the partners of his voyage) once more in the shapes of men; and the food which could give him nourishment must be taken in at his eyes. Because he missed this sight, he sat melancholy and thoughtful, and would taste of none of the rich delicacies placed before him. Which when Circe noted, she easily divined the cause of his sadness, and leaving the seat in which she sat throned, went to her sty, and led abroad his men, who came in like swine, and filled the ample hall, where Ulysses sat, with gruntings. Hardly had he time to let his sad eye run over their

altered forms and brutal metamorphosis, when with an ointment which she smeared over them, suddenly their bristles fell off, and they started up in their own shapes men as before. They knew their leader again, and clung about him with joy of their late restoration, and some shame for their late change; and wept so loud, blubbering out their joy in broken accents, that the palace was filled with a sound of pleasing mourning, and the witch herself, great Circe, was not unmoved at the sight. To make her atonement complete, she sent for the remnant of Ulysses' men who stayed behind at the ship, giving up their great commander for lost; who when they came, and saw him again alive, circled with their fellows, no expression can tell what joy they felt; they even cried out with rapture, and to have seen their frantic expressions of mirth, a man might have supposed that they were just in sight of their country earth, the cliffs of rocky Ithaca. Only Eurylochus would hardly be persuaded to enter that palace of wonders, for he remembered with a kind of horror how his companions had vanished from his sight.

Then great Circe spake, and gave order, that there should be no more sadness among them, nor remembering of past sufferings. For as yet they fared like men that are exiles from their country, and if a gleam of mirth shot among them, it was suddenly quenched with the thought of their helpless and homeless condition. Her kind persuasions wrought upon Ulysses and the rest, that they spent twelve months in all manner of delight with her in her palace. For Circe was a powerful magician, and could command the moon from her sphere, or unroot the solid oak from its place to make it dance for their diversion, and by the help of her illusions she could vary the taste of pleasures, and contrive delights, recreations, and jolly pastimes, to "fetch the day about from sun to sun, and rock the tedious year as in a delightful dream."

At length Ulysses awoke from the trance of the faculties into which her charms had thrown him, and the thought of home returned with tenfold vigour to goad and sting him; that home where he had left his virtuous wife Penelope, and his young son Telemachus. One day when Circe had been lavish of her caresses, and was in her kindest humour, he moved to her subtilely, and as it were afar off, the question of his home-return; to which she answered firmly, "O Ulysses, it is not in my power to detain one whom the gods have destined to further trials. But leaving me, before you pursue your journey home, you must visit the house of Hades, or Death, to consult the shade of Tiresias the Theban prophet; to whom alone, of all the dead, Proserpine, queen of hell, has committed the secret of future events: it is he that must inform you whether you shall ever see again your wife and country." "O Circe," he cried; "that is impossible: who shall steer my course to Pluto's kingdom? Never ship had strength to make that voyage." "Seek no guide," she replied; "but raise you your mast, and hoist your white sails, and sit in your ship in peace: the north wind shall waft you through the seas, till you shall cross the expanse of the ocean, and come to where grow the poplar groves, and willows pale, of Proserpine: where Pyriphlegethon and Cocytus and Acheron mingle their waves. Cocytus is an arm of Styx, the forgetful river. Here dig a pit, and make it a cubit broad and a cubit long, and pour in milk, and honey, and wine, and the blood of a ram, and the blood of a black ewe, and turn away thy face while thou pourest in, and the dead shall come flocking to taste the milk and the blood: but suffer none to approach thy offering till thou hast inquired of Tiresias all which thou wishest to know."

He did as great Circe had appointed. He raised his mast, and hoisted his white sails, and sat in his ship in peace. The north wind wafted him through the seas, till he crossed the ocean, and came to the sacred woods of Proserpine. He stood at the confluence of the three floods, and digged a pit, as she had given directions, and poured in his offering; the blood of a ram, and the blood

of a black ewe, milk, and honey, and wine; and the dead came to his banquet: aged men, and women, and youths, and children who died in infancy. But none of them would he suffer to approach, and dip their thin lips in the offering, till Tiresias was served, not though his own mother was among the number, whom now for the first time he knew to be dead, for he had left her living when he went to Troy, and she had died since his departure, and the tidings never reached him: though it irked his soul to use constraint upon her, yet in compliance with the injunction of great Circe, he forced her to retire along with the other ghosts. Then Tiresias, who bore a golden sceptre, came and lapped of the offering, and immediately he knew Ulysses, and began to prophesy: *he denounced woe to Ulysses, woe, woe, and many sufferings, through the anger of Neptune for the putting out of the eye of the sea-god's son. Yet there was safety after suffering, if they could abstain from slaughtering the oxen of the Sun after they landed in the Triangular island. For Ulysses, the gods had destined him from a king to become a beggar, and to perish by his own guests, unless he slew those who knew him not.*

This prophecy, ambiguously delivered, was all that Tiresias was empowered to unfold, or else there was no longer place for him; for now the souls of the other dead came flocking in such numbers, tumultuously demanding the blood, that freezing horror seized the limbs of the living Ulysses, to see so many, and all dead, and he the only one alive in that region. Now his mother came and lapped the blood, without restraint from her son, and now she knew him to be her son, and inquired of him why he had come alive to their comfortless habitations. And she said, that affliction for Ulysses' long absence had preyed upon her spirits, and brought her to the grave.

Ulysses' soul melted at her moving narration, and forgetting the state of the dead, and that the airy texture of disembodied spirits does not admit of the embraces of flesh and blood, he threw his arms about her to clasp her: the poor ghost melted from his embrace, and looking mournfully upon him vanished away.

Then saw he other females.—Tyro, who when she lived was the paramour of Neptune, and by him had Pelias, and Neleus. Antiope, who bore two like sons to Jove, Amphion and Zethus, founders of Thebes. Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, with her fair daughter, afterwards her daughter-in-law, Megara. There also Ulysses saw Jocasta, the unfortunate mother and wife of Œdipus; who ignorant of kin wedded with her son, and when she had discovered the unnatural alliance, for shame and grief hanged herself. He continued to drag a wretched life above the earth, haunted by the dreadful Furies.—There was Leda, the wife of Tyndarus, the mother of the beautiful Helen, and of the two brave brothers, Castor and Pollux, who obtained this grace from Jove, that being dead, they should enjoy life alternately, living in pleasant places under the earth. For Pollux had prayed that his brother Castor, who was subject to death, as the son of Tyndarus, should partake of his own immortality, which he derived from an immortal sire: this the Fates denied; therefore Pollux was permitted to divide his immortality with his brother Castor, dying and living alternately.—There was Iphimedeia, who bore two sons to Neptune that were giants, Otus and Ephialtes: Earth in her prodigality never nourished bodies to such portentous size and beauty as these two children were of, except Orion. At nine years old they had imaginations of climbing to heaven to see what the gods were doing; they thought to make stairs of mountains, and were for piling Ossa upon Olympus, and setting Pelion upon that, and had perhaps performed it, if they had lived till they were striplings; but they were cut off by death in the infancy of their ambitious project.—Phædra was there, and Procris, and Ariadne, mournful for Theseus's desertion, and Mæra, and Clymene, and Eryphile, who preferred gold before wedlock faith.

But now came a mournful ghost, that late was Agamemnon, son of Atreus, the mighty leader of all the host of Greece and their confederate kings that warred against Troy. He came with the rest to sip a little of the blood at that uncomfortable banquet. Ulysses was moved with compassion to see him among them, and asked him what untimely fate had brought him there, if storms had overwhelmed him coming from Troy, or if he had perished in some mutiny by his own soldiers at a division of the prey.

"By none of these," he replied, "did I come to my death, but slain at a banquet to which I was invited by Ægisthus after my return home. He conspiring with my adulterous wife, they laid a scheme for my destruction, training me forth to a banquet as an ox goes to the slaughter, and there surrounding me they slew me with all my friends about me.

"Clytemnestra, my wicked wife, forgetting the vows which she swore to me in wedlock, would not lend a hand to close my eyes in death. But nothing is so heaped with impieties as such a woman, who would kill her spouse that married her a maid. When I brought her home to my house a bride, I hoped in my heart that she would be loving to me and to my children. Now, her black treacheries have cast a foul aspersion on her whole sex. Blest husbands will have their loving wives in suspicion for her bad deeds."

"Alas!" said Ulysses, "there seems to be a fatality in your royal house of Atreus, and that they are hated of Jove for their wives. For Helen's sake, your brother Menelaus's wife, what multitudes fell in the wars of Troy!"

Agamemnon replied, "For this cause be not thou more kind than wise to any woman. Let not thy words express to her at any time all that is in thy mind, keep still some secrets to thyself. But thou by any bloody contrivances of thy wife never need'st fear to fall. Exceeding wise she is, and to her wisdom she has a goodness as eminent; Icarius's daughter, Penelope the chaste: we left her a young bride when we parted from our wives to go to the wars, her first child suckling at her breast, the young Telemachus, whom you shall see grown up to manhood on your return, and he shall greet his father with befitting welcomes. My Orestes, my dear son, I shall never see again. His mother has deprived his father of the sight of him, and perhaps will slay him as she slew his sire. It is now no world to trust a woman in.—But what says fame? is my son yet alive? lives he in Orchomen, or in Pylus, or is he resident in Sparta, in his uncle's court? as yet, I see, divine Orestes is not here with me."

To this Ulysses replied that he had received no certain tidings where Orestes abode, only some uncertain rumours which he could not report for truth.

While they held this sad conference, with kind tears striving to render unkind fortunes more palatable, the soul of great Achilles joined them. "What desperate adventure has brought Ulysses to these regions," said Achilles, "to see the end of dead men and their foolish shades?"

Ulysses answered him that he had come to consult Tiresias respecting his voyage home. "But thou, O son of Thetis," said he, "why dost thou disparage the state of the dead? seeing that as alive thou didst surpass all men in glory, thou must needs retain thy pre-eminence here below: so great Achilles triumphs over death."

But Achilles made reply that he had much rather be a peasant-slave upon the earth than reign over all the dead. So much did the inactivity and slothful condition of that state displease his unquenchable and restless spirit. Only he inquired of Ulysses if his father Peleus were living, and how his son Neoptolemus conducted himself.

Of Peleus Ulysses could tell him nothing; but of Neoptolemus he thus bore witness: "From Scyros I convoyed your son by sea to the Greeks, where I can speak of him, for I knew him. He was chief in council and in the field.

When any question was proposed, so quick was his conceit in the forward apprehension of any case, that he ever spoke first, and was heard with more attention than the older heads. Only myself and aged Nestor could compare with him in giving advice. In battle I cannot speak his praise, unless I could count all that fell by his sword. I will only mention one instance of his manhood. When we sat hid in the belly of the wooden horse, in the ambush which deceived the Trojans to their destruction, I, who had the management of that stratagem, still shifted my place from side to side to note the behaviour of our men. In some I marked their hearts trembling, through all the pains which they took to appear valiant, and in others tears, that in spite of manly courage would gush forth. And to say truth, it was an adventure of high enterprise, and as perilous a stake as was ever played in war's game. But in him I could not observe the least sign of weakness, no tears nor tremblings, but his hand still on his good sword, and ever urging me to set open the machine and let us out before the time was come for doing it; and when we sallied out he was still first in that fierce destruction and bloody midnight desolation of King Priam's city."

This made the soul of Achilles to tread a swifter pace, with high-raised feet, as he vanished away, for the joy which he took in his son being applauded by Ulysses.

A sad shade stalked by, which Ulysses knew to be the ghost of Ajax, his opponent, when living, in that famous dispute about the right of succeeding to the arms of the deceased Achilles. They being adjudged by the Greeks to Ulysses, as the prize of wisdom above bodily strength, the noble Ajax in despite went mad, and slew himself. The sight of his rival turned to a shade by his dispute, so subdued the passion of emulation in Ulysses, that for his sake he wished that judgment in that controversy had been given against himself, rather than so illustrious a chief should have perished for the desire of those arms, which his prowess (second only to Achilles in fight) so eminently had deserved. "Ajax," he cried, "all the Greeks mourn for thee as much as they lamented for Achilles. Let not thy wrath burn for ever, great son of Telamon. Ulysses seeks peace with thee, and will make any atonement to thee that can appease thy hurt spirit." But the shade stalked on, and would not exchange a word with Ulysses, though he prayed it with many tears and many earnest entreaties. "He might have spoke to me," said Ulysses, "since I spoke to him; but I see the resentments of the dead are eternal."

Then Ulysses saw a throne, on which was placed a judge distributing sentence. He that sat on the throne was Minos, and he was dealing out just judgments to the dead. He it is that assigns them their place in bliss or woe.

Then came by a thundering ghost, the large-limbed Orion, the mighty hunter, who was hunting there the ghosts of the beasts which he had slaughtered in desert hills upon the earth; for the dead delight in the occupations which pleased them in the time of their living upon the earth.

There was Tityus suffering eternal pains because he had sought to violate the honour of Latona as she passed from Pytho into Panopeus. Two vultures sat perpetually preying upon his liver with their crooked beaks, which as fast as they devoured is for ever renewed; nor can he fray them away with his great hands.

There was Tantalus, plagued for his great sins, standing up to the chin in water, which he can never taste, but still as he bows his head, thinking to quench his burning thirst, instead of water he licks up unsavoury dust. All fruits pleasant to the sight, and of delicious flavour, hang in ripe clusters about his head, seeming as though they offered themselves to be plucked by him; but when he reaches out his hand, some wind carries them far out of his sight into the clouds, so he is starved in the midst of plenty by the righteous

doom of Jove, in memory of that inhuman banquet at which the sun turned pale, when the unnatural father served up the limbs of his little son in a dish, as meat for his divine guests.

There was Sisyphus, that sees no end to his labours. His punishment is, to be for ever rolling up a vast stone to the top of a mountain, which wheu it gets to the top, falls down with a crushing weight, and all his work is to be begun again. He was bathed all over in sweat, that reeked out a smoke which covered his head like a mist. His crime had been the revealing of state secrets.

There Ulysses saw Hercules: not that Hercules who enjoys immortal life in heaven among the gods, and is married to Hebe or Youth, but his shadow which remains below. About him the dead flocked as thick as bats, hovering around, and cuffing at his head: he stands with his dreadful bow, ever in the act to shoot.

There also might Ulysses have seen and spoken with the shades of Theseus, and Pirithous, and the old heroes; but he had conversed enough with horrors, therefore covering his face with his hands, that he might see no more spectres, he resumed his seat in his ship, and pushed off. The barque moved of itself without the help of any oar, and soon brought him out of the regions of death into the cheerful quarters of the living, and to the island of Ææa, whence he had set forth.

## CHAPTER III.

The song of the Sirens. Scylla and Charybdis. The oxen of the Sun. The judgment. The crew killed by lightning.

"UNHAPPY man, who at thy birth wast appointed twice to die! others shall die once: but thou, besides that death that remains for thee, common to all men, hast in thy lifetime visited the shades of death. Thee Scylla, thee Charybdis, expect. Thee the deathful Sirens lie in wait for, that taint the minds of whoever listen to them with their sweet singing. Whosoever shall but hear the call of any Siren, he will so despise both wife and children through their sorceries, that the stream of his affection never again shall set homewards, nor shall he take joy in wife or children thereafter, or they in him."

With these prophetic greetings great Circe met Ulysses on his return. He besought her to instruct him in the nature of the Sirens, and by what method their baneful allurements were to be resisted.

"They are sisters three," she replied, "that sit in a mead (by which your ship must needs pass) circled with dead men's bones. These are the bones of men whom they have slain, after with fawning invitements they have enticed them into their fen. Yet such is the celestial harmony of their voice accompanying the persuasive magic of their words, that knowing this, you shall not be able to withstand their enticements. Therefore when you are to sail by them, you shall stop the ears of your companions with wax, that they may hear no note of that dangerous music; but for yourself, that you may hear, and yet live, give them strict command to bind you hand and foot to the mast, and in no case to set you free, till you are out of the danger of the temptation, though you should entreat it, and implore it ever so much, but to bind you rather the more for your requesting to be loosed. So shall you escape that snare."

Ulysses then prayed her that she would inform him what Scylla and Charybdis were, which she had taught him by name to fear. She replied: "Sailing from Ææa to Trinacria, you must pass at an equal distance between two fatal rocks. Incline never so little either to the one side or the other, and

your ship must meet with certain destruction. No vessel ever yet tried that pass without being lost, but the Argo, which owed her safety to the sacred freight she bore, the fleece of the golden-backed ram, which could not perish. The biggest of these rocks which you shall come to, Scylla hath in charge. There in a deep whirlpool at the foot of the rock the abhorred monster shrouds her face; who if she were to show her full form, no eye of man or god could endure the sight; thence she stretches out all her six long necks peering and diving to suck up fish, dolphins, dog-fish, and whales, whole ships, and their men, whatever comes within her raging gulf. The other rock is lesser, and of less ominous aspect; but there dreadful Charybdis sits, supping the black deeps. Thrice a day she drinks her pits dry, and thrice a day again she belches them all up: but when she is drinking, come not nigh, for being once caught, the force of Neptune cannot redeem you from her swallow. Better trust to Scylla, for she will but have for her six necks, six men: Charybdis in her insatiate draught will ask all."

Then Ulysses inquired, in case he should escape Charybdis, whether he might not assail that other monster with his sword: to which she replied that he must not think that he had an enemy subject to death, or wounds, to contend with: for Scylla could never die. Therefore, his best safety was in flight, and to invoke none of the gods but Cratis, who is Scylla's mother, and might perhaps forbid her daughter to devour them. For his conduct after he arrived at Trinacria she referred him to the admonitions which had been given him by Tiresias.

Ulysses having communicated her instructions, as far as related to the Sirens, to his companions, who had not been present at that interview; but concealing from them the rest, as he had done the terrible predictions of Tiresias, that they might not be deterred by fear from pursuing their voyage: the time for departure being come, they set their sails, and took a final leave of great Circe; who by her art calmed the heavens, and gave them smooth seas, and a right fore wind (the seaman's friend) to bear them on their way to Ithaca.

They had not sailed past a hundred leagues before the breeze which Circe had lent them suddenly stopped. It was stricken dead. All the sea lay in prostrate slumber. Not a gasp of air could be felt. The ship stood still. Ulysses guessed that the island of the Sirens was not far off, and that they had charmed the air so with their devilish singing. Therefore he made him cakes of wax, as Circe had instructed him, and stopped the ears of his men with them: then causing himself to be bound hand and foot, he commanded the rowers to ply their oars and row as fast as speed could carry them past that fatal shore. They soon came within sight of the Sirens, who sang in Ulysses' hearing:

> Come here, thou, worthy of a world of praise,
> That dost so high the Grecian glory raise;
> Ulysses! stay thy ship; and that song hear
> That none pass'd ever, but it bent his ear,
> But left him ravish'd, and instructed more
> By us, than any, ever heard before.
> For we know all things, whatsoever were
> In wide Troy labour'd; whatsoever there
> The Grecians and the Trojans both sustain'd:
> By those high issues that the gods ordain'd:
> And whatsoever all the earth can show
> To inform a knowledge of desert, we know.

These were the words, but the celestial harmony of the voices which sang them no tongue can describe: it took the ear of Ulysses with ravishment. He would have broke his bonds to rush after them; and threatened, wept, sued, entreated, commanded, crying out with tears and passionate imprecations, con-

juring his men by all the ties of perils past which they had endured in common, by fellowship and love, and the authority which he retained among them, to let him loose ; but at no rate would they obey him. And still the Sirens sang. Ulysses made signs, motions, gestures, promising mountains of gold if they would set him free; but their oars only moved faster. And still the Sirens sung. And still the more he adjured them to set him free, the faster with cords and ropes they bound him; till they were quite out of bearing of the Sirens' notes, whose effect great Circe had so truly predicted. And well she might speak of them, for often she had joined her own enchanting voice to theirs, while she has sat in the flowery meads, mingled with the Sirens and the Water Nymphs, gathering their potent herbs and drugs of magic quality: their singing altogether has made the gods stoop, and "heaven drowsy with the harmony."

Escaped that peril, they had not sailed yet an hundred leagues farther, when they heard a roar afar off, which Ulysses knew to be the barking of Scylla's dogs, which surround her waist, and bark incessantly. Coming nearer they beheld a smoke ascend, with a horrid murmur, which arose from that other whirlpool, to which they made nigher approaches than to Scylla. Through the furious eddy, which is in that place, the ship stood still as a stone, for there was no man to lend his hand to an oar, the dismal roar of Scylla's dogs at a distance, and the nearer clamours of Charybdis, where everything made an echo, quite taking from them the power of exertion. Ulysses went up and down encouraging his men, one by one, giving them good words, telling them that they were in greater perils when they were blocked up in the Cyclop's cave, yet, heaven assisting his counsels, he had delivered them out of that extremity. That he could not believe but they remembered it; and wished them to give the same trust to the same care which he had now for their welfare. That they must exert all the strength and wit which they had, and try if Jove would not grant them an escape even out of this peril. In particular he cheered up the pilot who sat at the helm, and told him that he must show more firmness than other men, as he had more trust committed to him, and had the sole management by his skill of the vessel in which all their safeties were embarked. That a rock lay hid within those boiling whirlpools which he saw, on the outside of which he must steer, if he would avoid his own destruction, and the destruction of them all.

They heard him, and like men took to the oars; but little knew what opposite danger, in shunning that rock, they must be thrown upon. For Ulysses had concealed from them the wounds, never to be healed, which Scylla was to open: their terror would else have robbed them all of all care to steer, or move an oar, and have made them hide under the hatches, for fear of seeing her, where he and they must have died an idle death. But even then he forgot the precautions which Circe had given him to prevent harm to his person; who had willed him not to arm, or show himself once to Scylla : but disdaining not to venture life for his brave companions, he could not contain, but armed in all points, and taking a lance in either hand, he went up to the fore deck, and looked when Scylla would appear.

She did not show herself as yet, and still the vessel steered closer by her rock, as it sought to shun that other more dreaded : for they saw how horribly Charybdis's black throat drew into her all the whirling deep, which she disgorged again, that all about her boiled like a kettle, and the rock roared with troubled waters; which when she supped in again, all the bottom turned up, and disclosed far under shore the swart sands naked, whose whole stern sight frayed the startled blood from their faces, and made Ulysses turn his to view the wonder of whirlpools. Which when Scylla saw, from out her black den, she darted out her six long necks, and swoopt up as many of his friends : whose cries Ulysses heard, and saw them too late, with their heels turned up, and

their hands thrown to him for succour, who had been their help in all extremities, but could not deliver them now; and he heard them shriek out, as she tore them, and to the last they continued to throw their hands out to him for sweet life. In all his sufferings he never had beheld a sight so full of miseries.

Escaped from Scylla and Charyhdis, but with a diminished crew, Ulysses, and the sad remains of his followers reached the Trinacrian shore. Here landing, he beheld oxen grazing of such surpassing size and beauty, that both from them, and from the shape of the island (having three promontories jutting into the sea) he judged rightly that he was come to the Triangular island, and the oxen of the Sun, of which Tiresias had forewarned him.

So great was his terror lest through his own fault, or that of his men, any violence or profanation should be offered to the holy oxen, that even then, tired as they were with the perils and fatigues of the day past, and unable to stir an oar, or use any exertion, and though night was fast coming on, he would have them re-embark immediately, and make the best of their way from that dangerous station; but his men with one voice resolutely opposed it, and even the too cautious Eurylochus himself withstood the proposal; so much did the temptation of a little ease and refreshment (ease tenfold sweet after such labours) prevail over the sagest counsels, and the apprehension of certain evil outweigh the prospect of contingent danger. They expostulated, that the nerves of Ulysses seemed to be made of steel, and his limbs not liable to lassitude like other men's; that waking or sleeping seemed indifferent to him; but that they were men, not gods, and felt the common appetites for food and sleep. That in the night-time all the winds most destructive to ships are generated. That black night still required to be served with meat, and sleep, and quiet havens and ease. That the best sacrifice to the sea was in the morning. With such sailor-like sayings and mutinous arguments, which the majority have always ready to justify disobedience to their betters, they forced Ulysses to comply with their requisition, and against his will to take up his night-quarters on shore. But he first exacted from them an oath that they would neither maim or kill any of the cattle which they saw grazing, but content themselves with such food as Circe had stowed their vessel with when they parted from Ææa. This they man by man severally promised, imprecating the heaviest curses on whoever should break it; and mooring their bark within a creek, they went to supper, contenting themselves that night with such food as Circe had given them, not without many sad thoughts of their friends whom Scylla had devoured, the grief of which kept them great part of the night waking.

In the morning Ulysses urged them again to a religious observance of the oath that they had sworn, not in any case to attempt the blood of those fair herds which they saw grazing, but to content themselves with the ship's food; for the god who owned those cattle sees and hears all.

They faithfully obeyed, and remained in that good mind for a month, during which they were confined to that station by contrary winds, till all the wine and the bread were gone, which they had brought with them. When their victuals were gone, necessity compelled them to stray in quest of whatever fish or fowl they could snare, which that coast did not yield in any great abundance. Then Ulysses prayed to all the gods that dwelt in bountiful heaven, that they would be pleased to yield them some means to stay their hunger without having recourse to profane and forbidden violations: but the ears of heaven seemed to be shut, or some god incensed plotted his ruin; for at mid-day, when he should chiefly have been vigilant and watchful to prevent mischief, a deep sleep fell upon the eyes of Ulysses, during which he lay totally insensible of all that passed in the world, and what his friends or what his enemies might do, for his welfare or destruction. Then Eurylochus took his advantage. He

was the man of most authority with them after Ulysses. He represented to them all the misery of their condition; how that every death is hateful and grevious to mortality, but that of all deaths famine is attended with the most painful, loathsome, and humiliating circumstances; that the subsistence which they could hope to draw from fowling or fishing was too precarious to be depended upon; that there did not seem to be any chance of the winds changing to favour their escape, but that they must inevitably stay there and perish, if they let an irrational superstition deter them from the means which nature offered to their hands; that Ulysses might be deceived in his belief that these oxen had any sacred qualities above other oxen; and even admitting that they were the property of the god of the Sun, as he said they were, the Sun did neither eat nor drink, and the gods were best served not by a scrupulous conscience, but by a thankful heart, which took freely what they as freely offered: with these and such-like persuasions he prevailed on his half-famished and half-mutinous companions, to begin the impious violation of their oath by the slaughter of seven of the fairest of these oxen which were grazing. Part they roasted and eat, and part they offered in sacrifice, to the gods, particularly to Apollo, god of the Sun, vowing to build a temple to his godhead, when they should arrive in Ithaca, and deck it with magnificent and numerous gifts: Vain men! and superstition worse than that which they so lately derided! to imagine that prospective penitence can excuse a present violation of duty, and that the pure natures of the heavenly powers will admit of compromise or dispensation for sin.

But to their feast they fell, dividing the roasted portions of the flesh, savoury and pleasant meat to them, but a sad sight to the eyes, and a savour of death in the nostrils, of the waking Ulysses; who just woke in time to witness, but not soon enough to prevent, their rash and sacrilegious banquet. He had scarce time to ask what great mischief was this which they had done unto him; when behold, a prodigy! the ox-hides which they had stripped, began to creep, as if they had life; and the roasted flesh bellowed as the ox used to do when he was living. The hair of Ulysses stood up an end with affright at these omens; but his companions, like men whom the gods had infatuated to their destruction, persisted in their horrible banquet.

The Sun from its burning chariot saw how Ulysses' men had slain his oxen, and he cried to his father Jove, "Revenge me upon these impious men who have slain my oxen, which it did me good to look upon when I walked my heavenly round. In all my daily course I never saw such bright and beautiful creatures as those my oxen were." The father promised that ample retribution should be taken of those accursed men: which was fulfilled shortly after, when they took their leaves of the fatal island.

Six days they feasted in spite of the signs of heaven, and on the seventh, the wind changing, they set their sails, and left the island; and their hearts were cheerful with the banquets they had held; all but the heart of Ulysses, which sank within him, as with wet eyes he beheld his friends, and gave them for lost, as men devoted to divine vengeance. Which soon overtook them: for they had not gone many leagues before a dreadful tempest arose, which burst their cables; down came their mast, crushing the scull of the pilot in its fall; off he fell from the stern into the water, and the bark wanting his management drove along at the wind's mercy: thunders roared, and terrible lightnings of Jove came down; first a bolt struck Eurylochus, then another, and then another, till all the crew were killed, and their bodies swam about like sea-mews; and the ship was split in pieces: only Ulysses survived; and he had no hope of safety but in tying himself to the mast, where he sat riding upon the waves, like one that in no extremity would yield to fortune. Nine days was he floating about with all the motions of the sea, with no other support than the slender mast under him, till the tenth night cast him, all spent and weary with toil upon the friendly shores of the island Ogygia.

## CHAPTER IV.

The island of Calypso. Immortality refused.

HENCEFORTH the adventures of the single Ulysses must be pursued. Of all those faithful partakers of his toil, who with him left Asia, laden with the spoils of Troy, now not one remains, but all a prey to the remorseless waves, and food for some great fish; their gallant navy reduced to one ship, and that finally swallowed up and lost. Where now are all their anxious thoughts of home? that perseverance with which they went through the severest sufferings and the hardest labours to which poor seafarers were ever exposed, that their toils at last might be crowned with the sight of their native shores and wives at Ithaca!—Ulysses is now in the isle Ogygia; called the Delightful Island. The poor shipwrecked chief, the slave of all the elements, is once again raised by the caprice of fortune into a shadow of prosperity. He that was cast naked upon the shore, bereft of all his companions, has now a goddess to attend upon him, and his companions are the nymphs which never die.—Who has not heard of Calypso? her grove crowned with alders and poplars? her grotto, against which the luxuriant vine laid forth his purple grapes? her ever new delights, crystal fountains, running brooks, meadows flowering with sweet balm-gentle and with violet: blue violets which like veins enamelled the smooth breasts of each fragrant mead! It were useless to describe over again what has been so well told already: or to relate those soft arts of courtship which the goddess used to detain Ulysses; the same in kind which she afterwards practised upon his less wary son, whom Minerva, in the shape of Mentor, hardly preserved from her snares, when they came to the Delightful Island together in search of the scarce departed Ulysses.

A memorable example of married love, and a worthy instance how dear to every good man his country is, was exhibited by Ulysses. If Circe loved him sincerely, Calypso loves him with tenfold more warmth and passion: she can deny him nothing, but his departure; she offers him everything, even to a participation of her immortality: if he will stay and share in her pleasures, he shall never die. But death with glory has greater charms for a mind heroic, than a life that shall never die, with shame; and when he pledged his vows to his Penelope, he reserved no stipulation that he would forsake her whenever a goddess should think him worthy of her bed, but they had sworn to live and grow old together: and he would not survive her if he could, nor meanly share in immortality itself, from which she was excluded.

These thoughts kept him pensive and melancholy in the midst of pleasure. His heart was on the seas, making voyages to Ithaca. Twelve months had worn away, when Minerva from heaven saw her favourite, how he sat still pining on the sea shores (his daily custom), wishing for a ship to carry him home. She (who is wisdom herself) was indignant that so wise and brave a man as Ulysses should be held in effeminate bondage by an unworthy goddess: and at her request, her father Jove ordered Mercury to go down to the earth to command Calypso to dismiss her guest. The divine messenger tied fast to his feet his winged shoes, which bear him over land and seas, and took in his hand his golden rod, the ensign of his authority. Then wheeling in many an airy round, he stayed not till he alighted on the firm top of the mountain Pieria: thence he fetched a second circuit over the seas, kissing the waves in his flight with his feet, as light as any sea-mew fishing dips her wings, till he touched the isle Ogygia, and soared up from the blue sea to the grotto of the goddess, to whom his errand was ordained.

His message struck a horror, checked by love, through all the faculties of Calypso. She replied to it, incensed: "You gods are insatiate, past all that live, in all things which you affect; which makes you so envious and grudging. It afflicts you to the heart, when any goddess seeks the love of a mortal man in marriage, though you yourselves without scruple link yourselves to women of the earth. So it fared with you, when the delicious-fingered Morning shared Orion's bed; you could never satisfy your hate and your jealousy, till you had incensed the chastity-loving dame, Diana, *who leads the precise life*, to come upon him by stealth in Ortygia, and pierce him through with her arrows. And when rich-haired Ceres gave the reins to her affections, and took Iasion (well worthy) to her arms, the secret was not so cunningly kept but Jove had soon notice of it, and the poor mortal paid for his felicity with death, struck through with lightnings. And now you envy me the possession of a wretched man, whom tempests have cast upon my shores, making him lawfully mine; whose ship Jove rent in pieces with his hot thunderbolts, killing all his friends. Him I have preserved, loved, nourished, made him mine by protection, my creature, by every tie of gratitude mine; have vowed to make him deathless like myself; him you will take from me. But I know your power, and that it is vain for me to resist. Tell your king that I obey his mandates."

With an ill grace Calypso promised to fulfil the commands of Jove; and, Mercury departing, she went to find Ulysses, where he sat outside the grotto, not knowing of the heavenly message, drowned in discontent, not seeing any human probability of his ever returning home.

She said to him: "Unhappy man, no longer afflict yourself with pining after your country, but build you a ship, with which you may return home; since it is the will of the gods: who doubtless as they are greater in power than I, are greater in skill, and best can tell what is fittest for man. But I call the gods, and my inward conscience, to witness, that I had no thought but what stood with thy safety, nor would have done or counselled anything against thy good. I persuaded thee to nothing which I should not have followed myself in thy extremity: for my mind is innocent and simple. O, if thou knewest what dreadful sufferings thou must yet endure, before ever thou reachest thy native land, thou wouldest not esteem so hardly of a goddess's offer to share her immortality with thee; nor, for a few years' enjoyment of a perishing Penelope, refuse an imperishable and never-dying life with Calypso."

He replied: "Ever-honoured, great Calypso, let it not displease thee, that I a mortal man desire to see and converse again with a wife that is mortal: human objects are best fitted to human infirmities. I well know how far in wisdom, in feature, in stature, proportion, beauty, in all the gifts of the mind, thou exceedest my Penelope: she a mortal, and subject to decay; thou immortal, ever growing, yet never old: yet in her sight all my desires terminate, all my wishes; in the sight of her, and of my country earth. If any god, envious of my return, shall lay his dreadful hand upon me as I pass the seas, I submit: for the same powers have given me a mind not to sink under oppression. In wars and waves my sufferings have not been small."

She heard his pleaded reasons, and of force she must assent; so to her nymphs she gave in charge from her sacred woods to cut down timber, to make Ulysses a ship. They obeyed, though in a work unsuitable to their soft fingers, yet to obedience no sacrifice is hard: and Ulysses busily bestirred himself, labouring far more hard than they, as was fitting, till twenty tall trees, driest and fittest for timber, were felled. Then like a skilful shipwright, he fell to joining the planks, using the plane, the axe, and the auger, with such expedition, that in four days' time a ship was made, complete with all her decks, hatches, sideboards, yards. Calypso added linen for the sails, and tackling; and when she was finished, she was a goodly vessel for a man to sail in alone, or in company, over the wide seas. By the fifth morning she was launched;

and Ulysses, furnished with store of provisions, rich garments, and gold and silver, given him by Calypso, took a last leave of her, and of her nymphs, and of the isle Ogygia which had so befriended him.

## CHAPTER V.

The tempest. The sea-bird's gift. The escape by swimming. The sleep in the woods.

At the stern of his solitary ship Ulysses sat, and steered right artfully. No sleep could seize his eyelids. He beheld the Pleiads, the Bear which is by some called the Wain, that moves round about Orion, and keeps still above the ocean, and the slow-setting sign Bootes, which some name the Waggoner. Seventeen days he held his course, and on the eighteenth the coast of Phæacia was in sight. The figure of the land, as seen from the sea, was pretty and circular, and looked something like a shield.

Neptune returning from visiting his favourite Æthiopians, from the mountains of the Solymi, descried Ulysses ploughing the waves, his domain. The sight of the man he so much hated for Polyhemus's sake, his son, whose eye Ulysses had put out, set the god's heart on fire, and snatching into his hand his horrid sea-sceptre, the trident of his power, he smote the air and the sea, and conjured up all his black storms, calling down night from the cope of heaven and taking the earth into the sea, as it seemed, with clouds, through the darkness and indistinctness which prevailed, the billows rolling up before the fury of all the winds that contended together in their mighty sport.

Then the knees of Ulysses bent with fear, and then all his spirit was spent, and he wished that he had been among the number of his countrymen who fell before Troy, and had their funerals celebrated by all the Greeks, rather than to perish thus, where no man could mourn him or know him.

As he thought these melancholy thoughts, a huge wave took him and washed him overboard, ship and all upset amidst the billows, he struggling afar off, clinging to her stern broken off which he yet held, her mast cracking in two with the fury of that gust of mixed winds that struck it, sails and sail-yards fell into the deep, and he himself was long drowned under water, nor could get his head above, wave so met with wave, as if they strove which should depress him most, and the gorgeous garments given him by Calypso clung about him, and hindered his swimming; yet neither for this, nor for the overthrow of his ship, nor his own perilous condition, would he give up his drenched vessel, but, wrestling with Neptune, got at length hold of her again, and then sat in her bulk, insulting over death, which he had escaped, and the salt waves which he gave the sea again to give to other men: his ship, striving to live, floated at random, cuffed from wave to wave, hurled to and fro by all the winds: now Boreas tossed it to Notus, Notus passed it to Eurus, and Eurus to the west wind, who kept up the horrid tennis.

Them in their mad sport Ino Leucothea beheld; Ino Leucothea, now a sea-goddess, but once a mortal and the daughter of Cadmus; she with pity beheld Ulysses the mark of their fierce contention, and rising from the waves alighted on the ship, in shape like to the sea-bird which is called a cormorant, and in her beak she held a wonderful girdle made of sea-weeds which grow at the bottom of the ocean, which she dropped at his feet, and the bird spake to Ulysses, and counselled him not to trust any more to that fatal vessel against which god Neptune had levelled his furious wrath, nor to those ill-befriending garments which Calypso had given him, but to quit both it and them, and trust for his safety to swimming. "And here," said the seeming bird, "take this girdle and tie about your middle, which has virtue to protect

the wearer at sea, and you shall safely reach the shore; but when you have landed, cast it far from you back into the sea." He did as the sea-bird instructed him, he stripped himself naked, and fastening the wondrous girdle about his middle, cast himself into the seas to swim. The bird dived past his sight into the fathomless abyss of the ocean.

Two days and two nights he spent in struggling with the waves, though sore buffetted and almost spent, never giving up himself for lost, such confidence he had in that charm which he wore about his middle, and in the words of that divine bird. But the third morning the winds grew calm, and all the heavens were clear. Then he saw himself nigh land, which he knew to be the coast of the Phæacians, a people good to strangers, and abounding in ships, by whose favour he doubted not that he should soon obtain a passage to his own country. And such joy he conceived in his heart, as good sons have that esteem their father's life dear, when long sickness has held him down to his bed, and wasted his body, and they see at length health return to the old man, with restored strength and spirits, in reward of their many prayers to the gods for his safety: so precious was the prospect of home-return to Ulysses, that he might restore health to his country (his better parent), that had long languished as full of distempers in his absence. And then for his own safety's sake he had joy to see the shores, the woods, so nigh and within his grasp as they seemed, and he laboured with all the might of hands and feet to reach with swimming that nigh-seeming land.

But when he approached near, a horrid sound of a huge sea beating against rocks informed him that here was no place for landing, nor any harbour for man's resort, but through the weeds and the foam which the sea belched up against the land he could dimly discover the rugged shore all bristled with flints, and all that part of the coast one impending rock that seemed impossible to climb, and the water all about so deep, that not a sand was there for any tired foot to rest upon, and every moment he feared lest some wave more cruel than the rest should crush him against a cliff, rendering worse than vain all his landing: and should he swim to seek a more commodious haven farther on, he was fearful lest, weak and spent as he was, the winds would force him back a long way off into the main, where the terrible god Neptune, for wrath that he had so nearly escaped his power, having gotten him again into his domain, would send out some great whale (of which those seas breed a horrid number) to swallow him up alive; with such malignity he still pursued him.

While these thoughts distracted him with diversity of dangers, one bigger wave drove against a sharp rock his naked body, which it gashed and tore, and wanted little of breaking all his bones, so rude was the shock. But in this extremity she prompted him that never failed him at need. Minerva (who is wisdom itself) put it into his thoughts no longer to keep swimming off and on, as one dallying with danger, but boldly to force the shore that threatened him, and to hug the rock that had torn him so rudely; which with both hands he clasped, wrestling with extremity, till the rage of that billow which had driven him upon it was past; but then again the rock drove back that wave so furiously, that it reft him of his hold, sucking him with it in his return, and the sharp rock (his cruel friend) to which he clinged for succour, rent the flesh so sore from his hands in parting, that he fell off, and could sustain no longer: quite under water he fell, and past the help of fate, there had the hapless Ulysses lost all portion that he had in this life, if Minerva had not prompted his wisdom in that peril to essay another course, and to explore some other shelter, ceasing to attempt that landing-place.

She guided his wearied and nigh-exhausted limbs to the mouth of the fair river river Calliroe,* which not far from thence disbursed its watery tribute to

* Καλλιρόοιο (*beautifully-flowing*). The *epithet* applied to the river by Homer, is changed into a proper name by Chapman, and by Lamb following him.—Ed.

the ocean. Here the shores were easy and accessible, and the rocks, which rather adorned than defended its banks, so smooth, that they seemed polished of purpose to invite the landing of our sea-wanderer, and to atone for the uncourteous treatment which those less hospitable cliffs had afforded him. And the god of the river, as if in pity, stayed his current and smoothed his waters, to make his landing more easy; for sacred to the ever-living deities of the fresh waters, be they mountain-stream, river, or lake, is the cry of erring mortals that seek their aid, by reason that being inland-bred they partake more of the gentle humanities of our nature than those marine deities, whom Neptune trains up in tempests in the unpitying recesses of his salt abyss.

So by the favour of the river's god Ulysses crept to land half-drowned; both his knees faltering, his strong hands falling down through weakness from the excessive toils he had endured, his cheek and nostrils flowing with froth of the sea-brine, much of which he had swallowed in that conflict, voice and breath spent, down he sank as in death. Dead weary he was. It seemed that the sea had soaked through his heart, and the pains he felt in all his veins were little less than those which one feels that has endured the torture of the rack. But when his spirits came a little to themselves, and his recollection by degrees began to return, he rose up, and unloosing from his waist the girdle or charm which that divine bird had given him, and remembering the charge which he had received with it, he flung it far from him into the river. Back it swam with the course of the ebbing stream till it reached the sea, where the fair hands of Ino Leucothea received it to keep it as a pledge of safety to any future shipwrecked mariner, that like Ulysses should wander in those perilous waves.

Then he kissed the humble earth in token of safety, and on he went by the side of that pleasant river till he came where a thicker shade of rushes that grew on its banks seemed to point out the place where he might rest his sea-wearied limbs. And here a fresh perplexity divided his mind, whether he should pass the night, which was coming on, in that place, where, though he feared no other enemies, the damps and frosts of the chill sea-air in that exposed situation might be death to him in his weak state; or whether he had better climb the next hill, and pierce the depth of some shady wood, in which he might find a warm and sheltered though insecure repose, subject to the approach of any wild beast that roamed that way. Best did this last course appear to him, though with some danger, as that which was more honourable and savoured more of strife and self-exertion, than to perish without a struggle the passive victim of cold and the elements.

So he bent his course to the nearest woods, where, entering in, he found a thicket, mostly of wild olives and such low trees, yet growing so intertwined and knit together, that the moist wind had not leave to play through their branches, nor the sun's scorching beams to pierce their recesses, nor any shower to beat through, they grew so thick and as it were folded each in the other; here creeping in, he made his bed of the leaves which were beginning to fall, of which was such abundance that two or three men might have spread them ample coverings, such as might shield them from the winter's rage, though the air breathed steel and blew as it would burst. Here creeping in, he heaped up store of leaves all about him, as a man would billets upon a winter fire, and lay down in the midst. Rich seed of virtue lying hid in poor leaves! Here Minerva soon gave him sound sleep; and here all his long toils past seemed to be concluded and shut up within the little sphere of his refreshed and closed eyelids.

## CHAPTER VI.

The princess Nausica. The washing. The game with the ball. The Court of Phæacia and king Alcinous.

MEANTIME Minerva designing an interview between the king's daughter of that country and Ulysses when he should awake, went by night to the palace of king Alcinous, and stood at the bedside of the princess Nausicaa in the shape of one of her favourite attendants, and thus addressed the sleeping princess:

"Nausicaa, why do you lie sleeping here, and never bestow a thought upon your bridal ornaments, of which you have many and beautiful, laid up in your wardrobe against the day of your marriage, which cannot be far distant; when you shall have need of all, not only to deck your own person, but to give away in presents to the virgins that honouring you shall attend you to the temple? Your reputation stands much upon the timely care of these things; these things are they which fill father and reverend mother with delight. Let us arise betimes to wash your fair vestments of linen and silks in the river; and request your sire to lend you mules and a coach, for your wardrobe is heavy, and the place where we must wash is distant, and besides it fits not a great princess like you to go so far on foot."

So saying she went away, and Nausicaa awoke, full of pleasing thoughts of her marriage, which the dream had told her was not far distant: and as soon as it was dawn, she arose and dressed herself and went to find her parents.

The queen her mother was already up, and seated among her maids, spinning at her wheel, as the fashion was in those primitive times, when great ladies did not disdain housewifery; and the king her father was preparing to go abroad at that early hour to council with his grave senate.

"My father," she said, "will you not order mules and a coach to be got ready, that I may go and wash, I and my maids, at the cisterns that stand without the city?"

"What washing does my daughter speak of?" said Alcinous.

"Mine and my brothers' garments," she replied, "that have contracted soil by this time with lying by so long in the wardrobe. Five sons have you, that are my brothers; two of them are married, and three are bachelors; these last it concerns to have their garments neat and unsoiled; it may advance their fortunes in marriage: and who but I their sister should have a care of these things? You yourself, my father, have need of the whitest apparel, when you go, as now, to the council."

She used this plea, modestly dissembling her care of her own nuptials to her father; who was not displeased at this instance of his daughter's discretion: for a seasonable care about marriage may be permitted to a young maiden, provided it to be accompanied with modesty and dutiful submission to her parents in the choice of her future husband: and there was no fear of Nausicaa choosing wrongly or improperly, for she was as wise as she was beautiful, and the best in all Phæacia were suitors to her for her love. So Alcinous readily gave consent that she should go, ordering mules and a coach to be prepared. And Nausicaa brought from her chamber all her vestments, and laid them up in the coach, and her mother placed bread and wine in the coach, and oil in a golden cruse, to soften the bright skins of Nausicaa and her maids when they came out of the river.

Nausicaa making her maids get up into the coach with her, lashed the mules,

till they brought her to the cisterns which stood a little on the outside of the town, and were supplied with water from the river Calliroe.

There her attendants unyoked the mules, took out the clothes, and steeped them in the cisterns, washing them in several waters, and afterwards treading them clean with their feet, venturing wagers who should have done soonest and cleanest, and using many pretty pastimes to beguile their labour as young maids use, while the princess looked on. When they had laid their clothes to dry, they fell to playing again, and Nausicaa joined them in a game with the ball, which is used in that country, which is performed by tossing the ball from hand to hand with great expedition, she who begins the pastime singing a song. It chanced that the princess, whose turn it became to toss the ball, sent it so far from its mark, that it fell beyond into one of the cisterns of the river: at which the whole company, in merry consternation, set up a shriek so loud as waked the sleeping Ulysses, who was taking his rest after his long toils, in the woods not far distant from the place where these young maids had come to wash.

At the sound of female voices Ulysses crept forth from his retirement, making himself a covering with boughs and leaves as well as he could to shroud his nakedness. The sudden appearance of his weather-beaten and almost naked form, so frighted the maidens that they scudded away into the woods and all about to hide themselves, only Minerva (who had brought about this interview to admirable purposes, by seemingly accidental means) put courage into the breast of Nausicaa, and she stayed where she was, and resolved to know what manner of man he was, and what was the occasion of his strange coming to them.

He not venturing (for delicacy) to approach and clasp her knees, as suppliants should, but standing far off, addressed this speech to the young princess:

"Before I presume rudely to press my petitions, I should first ask whether I am addressing a mortal woman, or one of the goddesses. If a goddess, you seem to me to be likest to Diana, the chaste huntress, the daughter of Jove. Like hers are your lineaments, your stature, your features, and air divine."

She making answer that she was no goddess, but a mortal maid, he continued:

"If a woman, thrice blessed are both the authors of your birth, thrice blessed are your brothers, who even to rapture must have joy in your perfections, to see you grown so like a young tree, and so graceful. But most blessed of all that breathe is he that has the gift to engage your young neck in the yoke of marriage. I never saw that man that was worthy of you. I never saw man or woman that at all parts equalled you. Lately at Delos (where I touched) I saw a young palm which grew beside Apollo's temple; it exceeded all the trees which ever I beheld for straightness and beauty: I can compare you only to that. A stupor past admiration strikes me, joined with fear, which keeps me back from approaching you, to embrace your knees. Nor is it strange; for one of freshest and firmest spirit would falter, approaching near to so bright an object: but I am one whom a cruel habit of calamity has prepared to receive strong impressions. Twenty days the unrelenting seas have tossed me up and down coming from Ogygia, and at length cast me shipwrecked last night upon your coast. I have seen no man or woman since I landed but yourself. All that I crave is clothes, which you may spare me, and to be shown the way to some neighbouring town. The gods who have care of strangers, will requite you for these courtesies."

She admiring to hear such complimentary words proceed out of the mouth of one whose outside looked so rough and unpromising, made answer: "Stranger, I discern neither sloth nor folly in you, and yet I see that you are

poor and wretched : from which I gather that neither wisdom nor industry can secure felicity ; only Jove bestows it upon whomsoever he pleases. He perhaps has reduced you to this plight. However, since your wanderings have brought you so near to our city, it lies in our duty to supply your wants. Clothes and what else a human hand should give to one so suppliant, and so tamed with calamity, you shall not want. We will show you our city and tell you the name of our people. This is the land of the Phæacians, of which my father Alcinous is king."

Then calling her attendants who had dispersed on the first sight of Ulysses, she rebuked them for their fear, and said : "This man is no Cyclop, nor monster of sea or land, that you should fear him ; but he seems manly, staid, and discreet, and though decayed in his outward appearance, yet he has the mind's riches, wit and fortitude, in abundance. Show him the cisterns where he may wash him from the sea-weeds and foam that hang about him, and let him have garments that fit him out of those which we have brought with us to the cisterns."

Ulysses retiring a little out of sight, cleansed him in the cisterns from the soil and impurities with which the rocks and waves had covered all his body, and clothing himself with befitting raiment, which the princess's attendants had given him, he presented himself in more worthy shape to Nausicaa. She admired to see what a comely personage he was, now he was dressed in all parts ; she thought him some king or hero : and secretly wished that the gods would be pleased to give her such a husband.

Then causing her attendants to yoke her mules, and lay up the vestments, which the sun's heat had sufficiently dried, in the coach, she ascended with her maids, and drove off to the palace ; bidding Ulysses, as she departed, keep an eye upon the coach, and to follow it on foot at some distance : which she did, because if she had suffered him to have rode in the coach with her, it might have subjected her to some misconstructions of the common people, who are always ready to vilify and censure their betters, and to suspect that charity is not always pure charity, but that love or some sinister intention lies hid under its disguise. So discreet and attentive to appearance in all her actions was this admirable princess.

Ulysses, as he entered the city, wondered to see its magnificence, its markets, buildings, temples ; its walls and rampires ; its trade, and resort of men ; its harbours for shipping, which is the strength of the Phæacian state. But when he approached the palace, and beheld its riches, the proportion of its architecture, its avenues, gardens, statues, fountains, he stood rapt in admiration, and almost forgot his own condition in surveying the flourishing estate of others : but recollecting himself, he passed on boldly into the inner apartment, where the king and queen were sitting at dinner with their peers ; Nausicaa having prepared them for his approach.

To them humbly kneeling he made it his request, that since fortune had cast him naked upon their shores, they would take him into their protection, and grant him a conveyance by one of the ships, of which their great Phæacian state had such good store, to carry him to his own country. Having delivered his request, to grace it with more humility, he went and sat himself down upon the hearth among the ashes, as the custom was in those days when any would make a petition to the throne.

He seemed a petitioner of so great state and of so superior a deportment, that Alcinous himself arose to do him honour, and causing him to leave that abject station which he had assumed, placed him next to his throne, upon a chair of state, and thus he spake to his peers :

"Lords and counsellors of Phæacia ye see this man, who he is we know not, that is come to us in the guise of a petitioner : he seems no mean one ; but whoever he is, it is fit, since the gods have cast him upon our protection,

that we grant him the rites of hospitality, while he stays with us, and at his departure, a ship well manned to convey so worthy a personage as he seems to be, in a manner suitable to his rank, to his own country."

This counsel the peers with one consent approved; and wine and meat being set before Ulysses, he ate and drank, and gave the gods thanks who had stirred up the royal bounty of Alcinous to aid him in that extremity. But not as yet did he reveal to the king and queen who he was, or whence he had come; only in brief terms he related his being cast upon their shores, his sleep in the woods, and his meeting with the princess Nausicaa: whose generosity, mingled with discretion, filled her parents with delight, as Ulysses in eloquent phrases adorned and commended her virtues. But Alcinous, humanely considering that the troubles which his guest had undergone required rest, as well as refreshment by food, dismissed him early in the evening to his chamber; where in a magnificent apartment Ulysses found a smoother bed, but not a sounder repose, than he had enjoyed the night before, sleeping upon leaves which he had scraped together in his necessity.

## CHAPTER VII.

The songs of Demodocus. The convoy home. The mariners transformed to stone. The young shepherd.

WHEN it was day-light, Alcinous caused it to be proclaimed by the heralds about the town that there was come to the palace a stranger, shipwrecked on their coast, that in mien and person resembled a god: and inviting all the chief people of the city to come and do honour to the stranger.

The palace was quickly filled with guests, old and young, for whose cheer, and to grace Ulysses more, Alcinous made a kingly feast with banquetings and music. Then Ulysses being seated at a table next the king and queen, in all men's view; after they had feasted, Alcinous ordered Demodocus, the court-singer, to be called to sing some song of the deeds of heroes, to charm the ear of his guest. Demodocus came and reached his harp, where it hung between two pillars of silver: and then the blind singer, to whom, in recompense of his lost sight, the muses had given an inward discernment, a soul and a voice to excite the hearts of men and gods to delight, began in grave and solemn strains to sing the glories of men highliest famed. He chose a poem, whose subject was the stern strife stirred up between Ulysses and great Achilles, as at a banquet sacred to the gods in dreadful language they expressed their difference; while Agamemnon sat rejoiced in soul to hear those Grecians jar: for the oracle in Pytho had told him, that the period of their wars in Troy should then be, when the kings of Greece, anxious to arrive at the wished conclusion, should fall to strife, and contend which must end the war, force or stratagem.

This brave contention he expressed so to the life, in the very words which they both used in the quarrel, as brought tears into the eyes of Ulysses at the remembrance of past passages of his life, and he held his large purple weed before his face to conceal it. Then craving a cup of wine, he poured it out in secret libation to the gods, who had put into the mind of Demodocus unknowingly to do him so much honour. But when the moving poet began to tell of other occurrences where Ulysses had been present, the memory of his brave followers who had been with him in all difficulties, now swallowed up and lost in the ocean, and of those kings that had fought with him at Troy, some of whom were dead, some exiles like himself, forced itself so strongly upon his mind, that forgetful where he was, he sobbed outright with passion; which yet he restrained, but not so cunningly but Alcinous perceived it, and without

taking notice of it to Ulysses, privately gave signs that Demodocus should cease from his singing.

Next followed dancing in the Phæacian fashion, when they would show respect to their guests ; which was succeeded by trials of skill, games of strength, running, racing, hurling of the quoit, mock fights, hurling of the javelin, shooting with the bow : in some of which Ulysses modestly challenging his entertainers, performed such feats of strength and prowess as gave the admiring Phæacians fresh reason to imagine that he was either some god, or hero of the race of the gods.

These solemn shows and pageants in honour of his guest, king Alcinous, continued for the space of many days, as if he could never be weary of showing courtesies to so worthy a stranger. In all this time he never asked him his name, nor sought to know more of him than he of his own accord disclosed : till on a day as they were seated feasting, after the feast was ended, Demodocus being called, as was the custom, to sing some grave matter, sang how Ulysses, on that night when Troy was fired, made dreadful proof of his valour, maintaining singly a combat against the whole household of Deiphobus, to which the divine expresser gave both act and passion, and breathed such a fire into Ulysses' deeds, that it inspired old death with life in the lively expressing of slaughters, and rendered life so sweet and passionate in the hearers, that all who heard felt it fleet from them in the narration : which made Ulysses even pity his own slaughterous deeds, and feel touches of remorse, to see how song can revive a dead man from the grave, yet no way can it defend a living man from death : and in imagination he underwent some part of death's horrors, and felt in his living body a taste of those dying pangs which he had dealt to others ; that with the strong conceit, tears (the true interpreters of unutterable emotion) stood in his eyes.

Which king Alcinous noting, and that this was now the second time that he had perceived him to be moved at the mention of events touching the Trojan wars, he took occasion to ask whether his guest had lost any friend or kinsman at Troy, that Demodocus's singing had brought into his mind. Then Ulysses, drying the tears with his cloak, and observing that the eyes of all the company were upon him, desirous to give them satisfaction in what he could, and thinking this a fit time to reveal his true name and destination, spake as follows :

"The courtesies which ye all have shown me, and in particular yourself and princely daughter, O king Alcinous, demand from me that I should no longer keep you in ignorance of what or who I am ; for to reserve any secret from you, who have with such openness of friendship embraced my love, would argue either a pusillanimous or an ungrateful mind in me. Know then that I am that *Ulysses*, of whom I perceive ye have heard something ; who heretofore have filled the world with the renown of my policies. I am he by whose counsels, if Fame is to be believed at all, more than by the united valour of all the Grecians, Troy fell. I am that unhappy man whom the heavens and angry gods have conspired to keep an exile on the seas, wandering to seek my home which still flies from me. The land which I am in quest of is Ithaca ; in whose ports some ship belonging to your navigation-famed Phæacian state may haply at some time have found a refuge from tempests. If ever you have experienced such kindness, requite it now ; by granting to me, who am the king of that land, a passport to that land.

Admiration seized all the court of Alcinous, to behold in their presence one of the number of those heroes who fought at Troy, whose divine story had been made known to them by songs and poems, but of the truth they had little known, or rather they had hitherto accounted those heroic exploits as fictions and exaggerations of poets ; but having seen and made proof of the real Ulysses, they began to take those supposed inventions to be real verities, and the tale of Troy to be as true as it was delightful.

Then king Alcinous made answer: "Thrice fortunate ought we to esteem our lot, in having seen and conversed with a man of whom report hath spoken so loudly, but, as it seems, nothing beyond the truth. Though we could desire no felicity greater than to have you always among us, renowned Ulysses, yet your desire having been expressed so often and so deeply to return home, we can deny you nothing, though to our own loss. Our kingdom of Phæacia, as you know, is chiefly rich in shipping. In all parts of the world, where there are navigable seas, or ships can pass, our vessels will be found. You cannot name a coast to which they do not resort. Every rock and deep quick-sand is known to them that lurks in the vast deep. They pass a bird in flight; and with such unerring certainty they make to their destination, that some have said they have no need of pilot or rudder, but that they move instinctively, self-directed, and know the minds of their voyagers. Thus much, that you may not fear to trust yourself in one of our Phæacian ships. To-morrow if you please you shall launch forth. To-day spend with us in feasting: who never can do enough when the gods send such visitors."

Ulysses acknowledged king Alcinous's bounty; and while these two royal personages stood interchanging courteous expressions, the heart of the princess Nausicaa was overcome: she had been gazing attentively upon her father's guest, as he delivered his speech; but when he came to that part where he declared himself to be Ulysses, she blessed herself, and her fortune, that in relieving a poor shipwrecked mariner, as he seemed no better, she had conferred a kindness on so divine a hero as he proved: and scarce waiting till her father had done speaking, with a cheerful countenance she addressed Ulysses, bidding him be cheerful, and when he returned home, as by her father's means she trusted he would shortly, sometimes to remember to whom he owed his life, and who met him in the woods by the river Calliroe.

"Fair flower of Phæacia," he replied, "so may all the gods bless me with the strife of joys in that desired day, whenever I shall see it, as I shall always acknowledge to be indebted to your fair hand for the gift of life which I enjoy, and all the blessings which shall follow upon my home-return. The gods give thee, Nausicaa, a princely husband; and from you two spring blessings to this state." So prayed Ulysses, his heart overflowing with admiration and grateful recollections of king Alcinous's daughter.

Then at the king's request he gave them a brief relation of all the adventures that had befallen him, since he launched forth from Troy: during which the princess Nausicaa took great delight (as ladies are commonly taken with these kind of travellers' stories) to hear of the monster Polyphemus, of the men that devour each other in Læstrygonia, of the enchantress Circe, of Scylla, and the rest; to which she listened with a breathless attention, letting fall a shower of tears from her fair eyes every now and then, when Ulysses told of some more than usual distressful passage in his travels: and all the rest of his auditors, if they had before entertained a high respect for their guest, now felt their veneration increased tenfold, when they learnt from his own mouth what perils, what sufferings, what endurance, of evils beyond man's strength to support, this much-sustaining, almost heavenly man, by the greatness of his mind, and by his invincible courage, had struggled through.

The night was far spent before Ulysses had ended his narrative, and with wishful glances he cast his eyes towards the eastern parts, which the sun had begun to flecker with his first red: for on the morrow Alcinous had promised that a bark should be in readiness to convoy him to Ithaca.

In the morning a vessel well manned and appointed was waiting for him; into which the king and queen heaped presents of gold and silver, massy plate, apparel, armour, and whatsoever things of cost or rarity they judged would be most acceptable to their guest: and the sails being set, Ulysses embarking with expressions of regret took his leave of his royal entertainers, of the fair

princess (who had been his first friend), and of the peers of Phæacia; who crowding down to the beach to have the last sight of their illustrious visitant, beheld the gallant ship with all her canvas spread, bounding and curveting over the waves, like a horse proud of his rider; or as if she knew that in her capacious womb's rich freightage she bore Ulysses.

He whose life past had been a series of disquiets, in seas among rude waves, in battles amongst ruder foes, now slept securely, forgetting all; his eye-lids bound in such deep sleep, as only yielded to death: and when they reached the nearest Ithacan port by the next morning, he was still asleep. The mariners not willing to awake him, landed him softly, and laid him in a cave at the foot of an olive-tree, which made a shady recess in that narrow harbour, the haunt of almost none but the sea-nymphs, which are called Naiads; few ships before this Phæacian vessel having put into that haven, by reason of the difficulty and narrowness of the entrance. Here leaving him asleep, and disposing in safe places near him the presents with which King Alcinous had dismissed him, they departed for Phæacia; where these wretched mariners never again set foot; but just as they arrived, and thought to salute their country earth; in sight of their city's turrets, and in open view of their friends who from the harbour with shouts greeted their return; their vessel and all the mariners which were in her were turned to stone, and stood transformed and fixed in sight of the whole Phæacian city, where it yet stands, by Neptune's vindictive wrath; who resented thus highly the contempt which those Phæacians had shown in convoying home a man whom the god had destined to destruction. Whence it comes to pass that the Phæacians at this day will at no price be induced to lend their ships to strangers, or to become the carriers for other nations, so highly do they still dread the displeasure of the sea-god, while they see that terrible monument ever in sight.

When Ulysses awoke, which was not till some time after the mariners had departed, he did not at first know his country again, either that long absence had made it strange, or that Minerva (which was more likely) had cast a cloud about his eyes, that he should have greater pleasure hereafter in discovering his mistake: but like a man suddenly awaking in some desert isle, to which his sea-mates have transported him in his sleep, he looked around, and discerning no known objects, he cast his hands to heaven for pity, and complained on those ruthless men who had beguiled him with a promise of conveying him home to his country, and perfidiously left him to perish in an unknown land. But then the rich presents of gold and silver given him by Alcinous, which he saw carefully laid up in secure places near him, staggered him: which seemed not like the act of wrongful or unjust men, such as turn pirates for gain, or land helpless passengers in remote coasts to possess themselves of their goods.

While he remained in this suspense, there came up to him a young shepherd, clad in the finer sort of apparel, such as kings' sons wore in those days when princes did not disdain to tend sheep, who accosting him, was saluted again by Ulysses, who asked him what country that was, on which he had been just landed, and whether it were a part of a continent, or an island. The young shepherd made show of wonder, to hear any one ask the name of that land; as country people are apt to esteem those for mainly ignorant and barbarous who do not know the names of places which are familiar to *them*, though perhaps they who ask have had no opportunities of knowing, and may have come from far countries.

"I had thought," said he, "that all people knew our land. It is rocky and barren, to be sure; but well enough: it feeds a goat or an ox well; it is not wanting neither in wine nor in wheat; it has good springs of water, some fair rivers; and wood enough, as you may see: it is called Ithaca."

Ulysses was joyed enough to find himself in his own country; but so pru-

dently he carried his joy, that dissembling his true name and quality, he pretended to the shepherd that he was only some foreigner who by stress of weather had put into that port; and framed on the sudden a story to make it plausible, how he had come from Crete in a ship of Phæacia; when the young shepherd laughing, and taking Ulysses' hand in both his, said to him: "He must be cunning, I find, who thinks to overreach you. What, cannot you quit your wiles and your subtleties, now that you are in a state of security? must the first word with which you salute your native earth be an untruth? and think you that you are unknown?"

Ulysses looked again; and he saw, not a shepherd, but a beautiful woman, whom he immediately knew to be the goddess Minerva, that in the wars of Troy had frequently vouchsafed her sight to him; and had been with him since in perils, saving him unseen.

"Let not my ignorance offend thee, great Minerva," he cried, "or move thy displeasure, that in that shape I knew thee not; since the skill of discerning the deities is not attainable by wit or study, but hard to be hit by the wisest of mortals. To know thee truly through all thy changes is only given to those whom thou art pleased to grace. To all men thou takest all likenesses. All men in their wits think that they know thee, and that they have thee. Thou art wisdom itself. But a semblance of thee, which is false wisdom, often is taken for thee: so thy counterfeit view appears to many, but thy true presence to few: those are they which, loving thee above all, are inspired with light from thee to know thee. But this I surely know, that all the time the sons of Greece waged war against Troy, I was sundry times graced with thy appearance; but since, I have never been able to set eyes upon thee till now; but have wandered at my own discretion, to myself a blind guide, erring up and down the world, wanting thee."

Then Minerva cleared his eyes, and he knew the ground on which he stood to be Ithaca, and that cave to be the same which the people of Ithaca had in former times made sacred to the sea-nymphs, and where he himself had done sacrifices to them a thousand times; and full in his view stood Mount Nerytus with all its woods: so that now he knew for a certainty that he was arrived in his own country, and with the delight which he felt he could not forbear stooping down and kissing the soil.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The change from a king to a beggar. Eumæus and the herdsmen. Telemachus.

NOT long did Minerva suffer him to indulge vain transports, but briefly recounting to him the events which had taken place in Ithaca during his absence, she showed him that his way to his wife and throne did not lie so open, but that before he was reinstated in the secure possession of them, he must encounter many difficulties. His palace, wanting its king, was become a resort of insolent and imperious men, the chief nobility of Ithaca and of the neighbouring isles, who, in the confidence of Ulysses being dead, came as suitors to Penelope. The queen (it was true) continued single, but was little better than a state-prisoner in the power of these men, who under a pretence of waiting her decision, occupied the king's house, rather as owners than guests, lording and domineering at their pleasure, profaning the palace, and wasting the royal substance, with their feasts and mad riots. Moreovert he goddess told him how, fearing the attempts of these lawless men upon the person of his young son Telemachus, she herself had put it into the heart of the prince, to go and seek his father in far countries; how in the shape of Mentor she had borne him company in his long search; which, though failing, as she meant it should fail,

in its first object, had yet had this effect, that through hardships he had learned endurance, through experience he had gathered wisdom, and wherever his footsteps had been he had left such memorials of his worth, as the fame of Ulysses' son was already blown throughout the world. That it was now not many days since Telemachus had arrived in the island, to the great joy of the queen his mother, who had thought him dead, by reason of his long absence, and had begun to mourn for him with a grief equal to that which she endured for Ulysses; the goddess herself having so ordered the course of his adventures that the time of his return should correspond with the return of Ulysses, that they might together concert measures how to repress the power and insolence of those wicked suitors. This the goddess told him; but of the particulars of his son's adventures, of his having been detained in the Delightful Island, which his father had so lately left, of Calypso, and her nymphs, and the many strange occurrences which may be read with profit and delight in the history of the prince's adventures, she forbore to tell him as yet, as judging that he would hear them with greater pleasure from the lips of his son, when he should have him in an hour of stillness and safety, when their work should be done, and none of their enemies left alive to trouble them.

Then they sat down, the goddess and Ulysses, at the foot of a wild olive-tree, consulting how they might with safety bring about his restoration. And when Ulysses revolved in his mind how that his enemies were a multitude, and he single, he began to despond, and he said, "I shall die an ill death like Agamemnon; in the threshold of my own house I shall perish, like that unfortunate monarch, slain by some one of my wife's suitors." But then again calling to mind his ancient courage, he secretly wished that Minerva would but breath such a spirit into his bosom as she enflamed him with in the day of Troy's destruction, that he might encounter with three hundred of those impudent suitors at once, and strew the pavemenis of his beautiful palace with their bloods and brains.

And Minerva knew his thoughts, and she said, "I will be strongly with thee, if thou fail not to do thy part. And for a sign between us that I will perform my promise, and for a token on thy part of obedience, I must change thee, that thy person may not be known of men."

Then Ulysses bowed his head to receive the divine impression, and Minerva by her great power changed his person so that it might not be known. She changed him to appearance into a very old man, yet such a one as by his limbs and gait seemed to have been some considerable person in his time, and to retain yet some remains of his once prodigious strength. Also, instead of those rich robes in which King Alcinous had clothed him, she threw over his limbs such old and tattered rags as wandering beggars usually wear. A staff supported his steps, and a scrip hung to his back, such as travelling mendicants use, to hold the scraps which are given to them at rich men's doors. So from a king he became a beggar, as wise Tiresias had predicted to him in the shades.

To complete his humiliation, and to prove his obedience by suffering, she next directed him in this beggarly attire to go and present himself to his old herdsman Eumæus, who had the care of his swine and his cattle, and had been a faithful steward to him all the time of his absence. Then strictly charging Ulysses that he should reveal himself to no man but to his own son, whom she would send to him when she saw occasion, the goddess went her way.

The transformed Ulysses bent his course to the cottage of the herdsman, and entering in at the front court, the dogs, of which Eumæus kept many fierce ones for the protection of the cattle, flew with open mouths upon him, as those ignoble animals have oftentimes an antipathy to the sight of anything like a beggar, and would have rent him in pieces with their teeth, if Ulysses

had not had the prudence to let fall his staff, which had chiefly provoked their fury, and sat himself down in a careless fashion upon the ground; but for all that some serious hurt had certainly been done to him, so raging the dogs were, had not the herdsman, whom the barking of the dogs had fetched out of the house, with shouting and with throwing of stones repressed them.

He said, when he saw Ulysses, "Old father, how near you were to being torn in pieces by these rude dogs! I should never have forgiven myself, if through neglect of mine any hurt had happened to you. But heaven has given me so many cares to my portion, that I might well be excused for not attending to everything: while here I lie grieving and mourning for the absence of that majesty which once ruled here, and am forced to fatten his swine and his cattle for evil men, who hate him, and who wish his death; when he perhaps strays up and down the world, and has not wherewith to appease hunger, if indeed he yet lives (which is a question) and enjoys the cheerful light of the sun." This he said, little thinking that he of whom he spoke now stood before him, and that in that uncouth disguise and beggarly obscurity was present the hidden majesty of Ulysses.

Then he had his guest into the house, and set meat and drink before him; and Ulysses said, "May Jove and all the other gods requite you for the kind speeches and hospitable usage which you have shown me!"

Eumæus made answer, "My poor guest, if one in much worse plight than yourself had arrived here, it were a shame to such scanty means as I have, if I had let him depart without entertaining him to the best of my ability. Poor men, and such as have no houses of their own, are by Jove himself recommended to our care. But the cheer which we that are servants to other men have to bestow, is but sorry at most, yet freely and lovingly I give it you. Indeed there once ruled here a man, whose return the gods have set their faces against, who, if he had been suffered to reign in peace and grow old among us, would have been kind to me and mine. But he is gone; and for his sake would to God that the whole posterity of Helen might perish with her, since in her quarrel so many worthies have perished. But such as your fare is, eat it, and be welcome; such lean beasts as are food for poor herdsmen. The fattest go to feed the voracious stomachs of the queen's suitors. Shame on their unworthiness, there is no day in which two or three of the noblest of the herd are not slain to support their feasts and their surfeits."

Ulysses gave good ear to his words, and as he ate his meat, he even tore it and rent it with his teeth, for mere vexation that his fat cattle should be slain to glut the appetites of those godless suitors. And he said, "What chief or what ruler is this, that thou commendest so highly, and sayest that he perished at Troy? I am but a stranger in these parts. It may be I have heard of some such in my long travels."

Eumæus answered, "Old father, never one of all the strangers that have come to our coast with news of Ulysses being alive, could gain credit with the queen or her son yet. These travellers, to get raiment or a meal, will not stick to invent any lie. Truth is not the commodity they deal in. Never did the queen get anything of them but lies. She receives all that come graciously, hears their stories, inquires all she can, but all ends in tears and dissatisfaction. But in God's name, old father, if you have got a tale, make the most on't, it may gain you a cloak or a coat from somebody to keep you warm: but for him who is the subject of it, dogs and vultures long since have torn him limb from limb, or some great fish at sea has devoured him, or he lieth with no better monument upon his bones than the sea-sand. But for me past all the race of men were tears created: for I never shall find so kind a royal master more; not if my father or my mother could come again and visit me from the tomb, would my eyes be so blessed, as they should be with the sight of him again, coming as from the dead. In his last rest my soul shall love

him. He is not here, nor do I name him as a flatterer, but because I am thankful for his love and care which he had to me a poor man; and if I knew surely that he were past all shores that the sun shines upon, I would invoke him as a deified thing."

For this saying of Eumæus the waters stood in Ulysses' eyes, and he said, "My friend, to say and to affirm positively that he cannot be alive, is to give too much license to incredulity. For, not to speak at random, but with as much solemnity as an oath comes to, I say to you that Ulysses shall return, and whenever that day shall be, then shall you give to me a cloak and a coat; but till then, I will not receive so much as a thread of a garment, but rather go naked; for no less than the gates of hell do I hate that man, whom poverty can force to tell an untruth. Be Jove then witness to my words, that this very year, nay ere this month be fully ended, your eyes shall behold Ulysses, dealing vengeance in his own palace upon the wrongers of his wife and his son."

To give the better credence to his words, he amused Eumæus with a forged story of his life, feigning of himself that he was a Cretan born, and one that went with Idomeneus to the wars of Troy. Also he said that he knew Ulysses, and related various passages which he alleged to have happened betwixt Ulysses and himself, which were either true in the main, as having really happened between Ulysses and some other person, or were so like to truth, as corresponding with the known character and actions of Ulysses that Eumæus' incredulity was not a little shaken. Among other things he asserted that he had lately been entertained in the court of Thesprotia, where the king's son of the country had told him, that Ulysses had been there but just before him, and was gone upon a voyage to the oracle of Jove in Dodona, whence he should shortly return, and a ship would be ready by the bounty of the Thesprotians to convoy him straight to Ithaca. "And in token that what I tell you is true," said Ulysses, "if your king come not within the period which I have named, you shall have leave to give your servants commandment to take my old carcass, and throw it headlong from some steep rock into the sea, that poor men, taking example by me, may fear to lie." But Eumæus made answer that that should be small satisfaction or pleasure to him.

So while they sat discoursing in this manner, supper was served in, and the servants of the herdsman, who had been out all day in the fields, came in to supper, and took their seats at the fire, for the night was bitter and frosty. After supper, Ulysses, who had well eaten and drunken, and was refreshed with the herdsman's good cheer, was resolved to try whether his host's hospitality would extend to the lending him a good warm mantle or rug to cover him in the night-season; and framing an artful tale for the purpose, in a merry mood, filling a cup of Greek wine, he thus began:

"I will you a story of your king Ulysses and myself. If there is ever a time when a man may have leave to tell his own stories, it is when he has drunken a little too much. Strong liquor driveth the fool, and moves even the heart of the wise, moves and impels him to sing and to dance, and break forth in pleasant laughters, and perchance to prefer a speech too which were better kept in. When the heart is open, the tongue will be stirring. But you shall hear. We led our powers to ambush once under the walls of Troy."

The herdsmen crowded about him eager to hear anything which related to their king Ulysses and the wars of Troy, and thus he went on:

"I remember, Ulysses and Menelaus had the direction of that enterprise, and they were pleased to join me with them in the command. I was at that time in some repute among men, though fortune has played me a trick since, as you may perceive. But I was somebody in those times, and could do something. Be that as it may, a bitter freezing night it was, such a night as this, the air cut like steel, and the sleet gathered on our shields like crystal. There was

some twenty of us that lay close crouched down among the reeds and bulrushes that grew in the moat that goes round the city. The rest of us made tolerable shift, for every man had been careful to bring with him a good cloak or mantle to wrap over his armour and keep himself warm; but I, as it chanced, had left my cloak behind me, as not expecting that the night would prove so cool, or rather I believe because I had at that time a brave suit of new armour on, which being a soldier, and having some of the soldier's vice about me, *vanity*, I was not willing should be hidden under a cloak; but I paid for my indiscretion with my sufferings, for the inclement night, and the wet of the ditch in which we lay, I was well-nigh frozen to death; and when I could endure no longer, I jogged Ulysses who was next to me, and had a nimble ear, and made known my case to him, assuring him that I must inevitably perish. He answered in a low whisper, "Hush, lest any Greek should hear you, and take notice of your softness." Not a word more he said, but showed as if he had no pity for the plight I was in. But he was as considerate as he was brave, and even then, as he lay with his head reposing upon his hand, he was meditating how to relieve me, without exposing my weakness to the soldiers. At last raising up his head, he made as if he had been asleep, and said, 'Friends, I have been warned in a dream to send to the fleet to king Agamemnon for a supply, to recruit our numbers, for we are not sufficient for this enterprise;' and they believing him, one Thoas was despatched on that errand, who departing, for more speed, as Ulysses had foreseen, left his upper garment behind him, a good warm mantle, to which I succeeded, and by the help of it got through the night with credit. This shift Ulysses made for one in need, and would to heaven that I had now that strength in my limbs, which made me in those days to be accounted fit to be a leader under Ulysses! I should not then want the loan of a cloak or mantle, to wrap about me and shield my old limbs from the night-air."

The tale pleased the herdsmen; and Eumæus, who more than all the rest was gratified to hear tales of Ulysses, true or false, said, that for his story he deserved a mantle, and a night's lodging, which he should have; and he spread for him a bed of goat and sheep skins by the fire; and the seeming beggar, who was indeed the true Ulysses, lay down and slept under that poor roof, in that abject disguise to which the will of Minerva had subjected him.

When morning was come, Ulysses made offer to depart, as if he were not willing to burthen his host's hospitality any longer, but said, that he would go and try the humanity of the town's folk, if any there would bestow upon him a bit of bread or a cup of drink. Perhaps the queen's suitors (he said) out of their full feasts would bestow a scrap on him: for he could wait at table, if need were, and play the nimble serving-man, he could fetch wood (he said) or build a fire, prepare roast meat or boiled, mix the wine with water, or do any of those offices which recommended poor men like him to services in great man's houses.

"Alas! poor guest," said Eumæus, "you know not what you speak. What should so poor and old a man as you do at the suitors' tables? Their light minds are not given to such grave servitors. They must have youths, richly tricked out in flowing vests, with curled hair, like so many of Jove's cupbearers, to fill out the wine to them as they sit at table, and to shift their trenchers. Their gorged insolence would but despise and make a mock at thy age. Stay here. Perhaps the queen, or Telemachus, hearing of thy arrival, may send to thee of their bounty."

As he spake these words, the steps of one crossing the front court were heard, and a noise of the dogs fawning and leaping about as for joy; by which token Eumæus guessed that it was the prince, who hearing of a traveller being arrived at Eumæus's cottage that brought tidings of his father, was come to search the truth, and Eumæus said: "It is the tread of Tele-

machus, the son of king Ulysses." Before he could well speak the words, the prince was at the door, whom Ulysses rising to receive, Telemachus would not suffer that so aged a man, as he appeared, should rise to do respect to him, but he courteously and reverently took him by the hand, and inclined his head to him, as if he had surely known that it was his father indeed: but Ulysses covered his eyes with his hands, that he might not show the waters which stood in them. And Telemachus said, "Is this the man who can tell us tidings of the king my father?"

"He brags himself to be a Cretan born," said Eumæus, "and that he has been a soldier and a traveller, but whether he speak the truth or not, he alone can tell. But whatsoever he has been, what he is now is apparent. Such as he appears, I give him to you; do what you will with him; his boast at present is that he is at the very best a supplicant."

"Be he what he may," said Telemachus, "I accept him at your hands. But where I should bestow him I know not, seeing that in the palace his age would not exempt him from the scorn and contempt which my mother's suitors in their light minds would be sure to fling upon him. A mercy if he escaped without blows: for they are a company of evil men, whose profession is wrongs and violence."

Ulysses answered: "Since it is free for any man to speak in presence of your greatness, I must say that my heart puts on a wolfish inclination to tear and to devour, hearing your speech, that these suitors should with such injustice rage, where you should have the rule solely. What should the cause be? do you wilfully give way to their ill manners? or has your government been such as has procured ill-will towards you from your people? or do you mistrust your kinsfolk and friends in such sort, as without trial to decline their aid? a man's kindred are they that he might trust to when extremities ran high."

Telemachus replied: "The kindred of Ulysses are few. I have no brothers to assist me in the strife. But the suitors are powerful in kindred and friends. The house of old Arcesius has had this fate from the heavens, that from old it still has been supplied with single heirs. To Arcesius Laertes only was born, from Laertes descended only Ulysses, from Ulysses I alone have sprung, whom he left so young, that from me never comfort arose to him. But the end of all rests in the hands of the gods."

Then Eumæus departing to see to some necessary business of his herds, Minerva took a woman's shape, and stood in the entry of the door, and was seen to Ulysses, but by his son she was not seen, for the presences of the gods are invisible save to those to whom they will to reveal themselves. Nevertheless the dogs which were about the door saw the goddess, and durst not bark, but went crouching and licking of the dust for fear. And giving signs to Ulysses that the time was now come in which he should make himself known to his son, by her great power she changed back his shape into the same which it was before she transformed him; and Telemachus, who saw the change, but nothing of the manner by which it was effected, only he saw the appearance of a king in the vigour of his age where but just now he had seen a worn and decrepit beggar, was struck with fear, and said, "Some god has done this house this honour," and he turned away his eyes, and would have worshipped. But his father permitted not, but said, "Look better at me; I am no deity, why put you upon me the reputation of godhead? I am no more but thy father: I am even he; I am that Ulysses, by reason of whose absence thy youth has been exposed to such wrongs from injurious men." Then kissed he his son, nor could any longer refrain those tears which he had held under such mighty restraint before, though they would ever be forcing themselves out in spite of him; but now, as if their sluices had burst, they came out like rivers, pouring upon the warm cheeks of his son. Nor yet

by all these violent arguments could Telemachus be persuaded to believe that it was his father, but he said, some deity had taken that shape to mock him; for he affirmed, that it was not in the power of any man, who is sustained by mortal food, to change his shape so in a moment from age to youth: for "but now," said he, "you were all wrinkles, and were old, and now you look as the gods are pictured."

His father replied: "Admire, but fear not, and know me to be at all parts substantially thy father, who in the inner powers of his mind, and the unseen workings of a father's love to thee, answers to his outward shape and pretence! There shall no more Ulysseses come here. I am he that after twenty years' absence, and suffering a world of ill, have recovered at last the sight of my country earth. It was the will of Minerva that I should be changed as you saw me. She put me thus together; she puts together or takes to pieces whom she pleases. It is in the law of her free power to do it: sometimes to show her favourites under a cloud, and poor, and again to restore to them their ornaments. The gods raise and throw down men with ease."

Then Telemachus could hold out no longer, but he gave way now to a full belief and persuasion, of that which for joy at first he could not credit, that it was indeed his true and very father, that stood before him; and they embraced, and mingled their tears.

Then said Ulysses, "Tell me who these suitors are, what are their numbers, and how stands the queen thy mother affected to them?"

"She bears them still in expectation," said Telemachus, "which she never means to fulfil, that she will accept the hand of some one of them in second nuptials. For she fears to displease them by an absolute refusal. So from day to day she lingers them on with hope, which they are content to bear the deferring of, while they have entertainment at free cost in our palace."

Then said Ulysses, "Reckon up their numbers that we may know their strength and ours, if we having none but ourselves may hope to prevail against them."

"O father," he replied, "I have oft-times heard of your fame for wisdom, and of the great strength of your arm, but the venturous mind which your speeches now indicate moves me even to amazement: for in no wise can it consist with wisdom or a sound mind, that two should try their strengths against a host. Nor five, or ten, or twice ten strong are these suitors, but many more by much: from Dulichium came there fifty and two, they and their servants, twice twelve crossed the seas hither from Samos, from Zacynthus twice ten, of our native Ithacans, men of chief note, are twelve who aspire to the bed and crown of Penelope, and all these under one strong roof, a fearful odds against two! My father, there is need of caution, lest the cup which your great mind so thirsts to taste of vengeance, prove bitter to yourself in the drinking. And therefore it were well that we would bethink us of some one who might assist us in this undertaking."

"Thinkest thou," said his father, "if we had Minerva and the king of skies to be our friends, would their sufficiencies make strong our part; or must we look out for some further aid yet?"

"They you speak of are above the clouds," said Telemachus, "and are sound aids indeed; as powers that not only exceed human, but bear the chiefest sway among the gods themselves."

Then Ulysses gave directions to his son, to go and mingle with the suitors, and in no wise to impart his secret to any, not even to the queen his mother, but to hold himself in readiness, and to have his weapons and his good armour in preparation. And he charged him, that when he himself should come to the palace, as he meant to follow shortly after and present himself in his beggar's likeness to the suitors, that whatever he should see which might grieve his heart, with what foul usage and contumelious language soever the suitors

should receive his father, coming in that shape, though they should strike and drag him by the heels along the floors, that he should not stir nor make offer to oppose them, further than by mild words to expostulate with them, until Minerva from heaven should give the sign which should be the prelude to their destruction. And Telemachus promising to obey his instructions departed; and the shape of Ulysses fell to what it had been before, and he became to all outward appearance a beggar, in base and beggarly attire.

## CHAPTER IX.

The queen's suitors. The battle of the beggars. The armour taken down. The meeting with Penelope.

FROM the house of Eumæus the seeming beggar took his way, leaning on his staff, till he reached the palace, entering in at the hall where the suitors sat at meat. They in the pride of their feasting began to break their jests in mirthful manner, when they saw one looking so poor and so aged approach. He who expected no better entertainment was nothing moved at their behaviour, but, as became the character which he had assumed, in a suppliant posture crept by turns to every suitor, and held out his hands for some charity, with such a natural and beggar-resembling grace, that he might seem to have practised begging all his life; yet there was a sort of dignity in his most abject stoopings, that whoever had seen him, would have said, If it had pleased heaven that this poor man had been born a king, he would gracefully have filled a throne. And some pitied him, and some gave him alms, as their present humours inclined them, but the greater part reviled him, and bid him begone, as one that spoiled their feast; for the presence of misery has this power with it, that while it stays, it can dash and overturn the mirth even of those who feel no pity or wish to relieve it; nature bearing this witness of herself in the hearts of the most obdurate.

Now Telemachus sat at meat with the suitors, and knew that it was the king his father, who in that shape begged an alms; and when his father came and presented himself before him in turn, as he had done to the suitors one by one, he gave him of his own meat which he had in his dish, and of his own cup to drink. And the suitors were past measure offended to see a pitiful beggar, as they esteemed him, to be so choicely regarded by the prince.

Then Antinous, who was a great lord, and of chief note among the suitors, said, "Prince Telemachus does ill to encourage these wandering beggars, who go from place to place, affirming that they have been some considerable persons in their time, filling the ears of such as hearken to them with lies, and pressing with their bold feet into kings' palaces. This is some saucy vagabond, some travelling Egyptian."

"I see," said Ulysses, "that a poor man should get but little at your board, scarce should he get salt from your hands if he brought his own meat."

Lord Antinous, indignant to be answered with such sharpness by a supposed beggar, snatched up a stool, with which he smote Ulysses where the neck and shoulders join. This usage moved not Ulysses: but in his great heart he meditated deep evils to come upon them all, which for a time must be kept close, and he went and sat himself down in the doorway to eat of that which was given him, and he said, "For life or possessions a man will fight, but for his belly this man smites. If a poor man has any god to take his part, my lord Antinous shall not live to be the queen's husband."

Then Antinous raged highly, and threatened to drag him by the heels, and to rend his rags about his ears, if he spoke another word.

But the other suitors did in no wise approve of the harsh language, nor of

the blow which Antinous had dealt; and some of them said, "Who knows but one of the deities goes about, hid under that poor disguise? for in the likeness of poor pilgrims the gods have many times descended to try the dispositions of men, whether they be humane or impious." While these things passed, Telemachus sat and observed all, but held his peace, remembering the instructions of his father. But secretly he waited for the sign which Minerva was to send from heaven.

That day there followed Ulysses to the court one of the common sort of beggars, Irus by name, one that had received alms before-time of the suitors, and was their ordinary sport, when they were inclined (as that day) to give way to mirth, to see him eat and drink; for he had the appetite of six men; and was of huge stature and proportions of body; yet had in him no spirit nor courage of a man. This man thinking to curry favour with the suitors, and recommend himself especially to such a great lord as Antinous was, began to revile and scorn Ulysses, putting foul language upon him, and fairly challenging him to fight with the fist. But Ulysses, deeming his railings to be nothing more than jealousy and that envious disposition which beggars commonly manifest to brothers in their trade, mildly besought him not to trouble him, but to enjoy that portion which the liberality of their entertainers gave him, as he did quietly; seeing that, of their bounty, there was sufficient for all.

But Irus thinking that this forbearance in Ulysses was nothing more than a sign of fear, so much the more highly stormed, and bellowed, and provoked him to fight; and by this time the quarrel had attracted the notice of the suitors, who with loud laughters and shouting egged on the dispute, and lord Antinous swore by all the gods it should be a battle, and that in that hall the strife should be determined. To this the rest of the suitors with violent clamours acceded, and a circle was made for the combatants, and a fat goat was proposed as the victor's prize, as at the Olympic or the Pythian games. Then Ulysses seeing no remedy, or being not unwilling that the suitors should behold some proof of that strength which ere long in their own persons they were to taste of, stripped himself, and prepared for the combat. But first he demanded that he should have fair play shown him, that none in that assembly should aid his opponent, or take part against him, for being an old man they might easily crush him with their strengths. And Telemachus passed his word that no foul play should be shown him, but that each party should be left to their own unassisted strengths, and to this he made Antinous and the rest of the suitors swear.

But when Ulysses had laid aside his garments, and was bare to the waist, all the beholders admired at the goodly sight of his large shoulders being of such exquisite shape and whiteness, and at his great and brawny bosom, and the youthful strength which seemed to remain in a man thought so old; and they said, What limbs and what sinews he has! and coward fear seized on the mind of that great vast beggar, and he dropped his threats and big words, and would have fled, but lord Antinous stayed him, and threatened him that if he declined the combat, he would put him in a ship, and land him on the shores where king Echetus reigned, the roughest tyrant which at that time the world contained, and who had that antipathy to rascal beggars, such as he, that when any landed on his coast, he would crop their ears and noses and give them to the dogs to tear. So Irus, in whom fear of king Echetus prevailed above the fear of Ulysses, addressed himself to fight. But Ulysses, provoked to be engaged in so odious a strife with a fellow of his base conditions, and loathing longer to be made a spectacle to entertain the eyes of his foes, with one blow which he struck him beneath the ear, so shattered the teeth and jawbone of this soon baffled coward, that he laid him sprawling in the dust, with small stomach or ability to renew the contest. Then raising him on his feet, he led him bleeding and sputtering to the door, and put his staff into his hand, and bid him go use

his command upon dogs and swine, but not presume himself to be lord of the guests another time, nor of the beggary!

The suitors applauded in their vain minds the issue of the contest, and rioted in mirth at the expense of poor Irus, who they vowed should be forthwith embarked, and sent to king Echetus; and they bestowed thanks on Ulysses for ridding the court of that unsavoury morsel, as they called him; but in their inward souls they would not have cared if Irus had been victor, and Ulysses had taken the foil, but it was mirth to them to see the beggars fight. In such pastimes and light entertainments the day wore away.

When evening was come the suitors betook themselves to music and dancing. And Ulysses leaned his back against a pillar from which certain lamps hung which gave light to the dancers, and he made show of watching the dancers, but very different thoughts were in his head. And as he stood near the lamps, the light fell upon his head, which was thin of hair and bald, as an old man's. And Eurymachus, a suitor, taking occasion from some words which were spoken before, scoffed and said, "Now I know for a certainty that some god lurks under the poor and beggarly appearance of this man, for as he stands by the lamps, his sleek head throws beams around it, like as it were a glory." And another said, "He passes his time too not much unlike the gods, lazily living exempt from labour, taking offerings of men." "I warrant," said Eurymachus again, "he could not raise a fence or dig a ditch for his livelihood, if a man would hire him to work in a garden."

"I wish," said Ulysses, "that you who speak this, and myself, were to be tried at any task-work, that I had a good crooked scythe put in my hand, that was sharp and strong, and you such another, where the grass grew longest, to be up by day-break, mowing the meadows till the sun went down, not tasting of food till we had finished, or that we were set to plough four acres in one day of good glebe land, to see whose furrows were evenest and cleanest, or that we might have one wrestling-bout together, or that in our right hands a good steel-headed lance were placed, to try whose blows fell heaviest and thickest upon the adversary's head-piece. I would cause you such work, as you should have small reason to reproach me with being slack at work. But you would do well to spare me this reproach, and to save your strength, till the owner of this house shall return, till the day when Ulysses shall return, when returning he shall enter upon his birthright."

This was a galling speech to those suitors, to whom Ulysses' return was indeed the thing which they most dreaded; and a sudden fear fell upon their souls, as if they were sensible of the real presence of that man who did indeed stand amongst them, but not in that form as they might know him; and Eurymachus, incensed, snatched a massy cup which stood on a table near, and hurled it at the head of the supposed beggar, and but narrowly missed the hitting of him; and all the suitors rose, as at once, to thrust him out of the hall, which they said his beggarly presence and his rude speeches had profaned. But Telemachus cried to them to forbear, and not to presume to lay hands upon a wretched man to whom he had promised protection. He asked if they were mad, to mix such abhorred uproar with his feasts. He bade them take their food and their wine, to sit up or to go to bed at their free pleasures, so long as he should give licence to that freedom; but why should they abuse his banquet, or let the words which a poor beggar spake have power to move their spleens so fiercely?

They bit their lips and frowned for anger, to be checked so by a youth; nevertheless for that time they had the grace to abstain, either for shame, or that Minerva had infused into them a terror of Ulysses's son.

So that day's feast was concluded without bloodshed, and the suitors, tired with their sports, departed severally each man to his apartment. Only Ulysses and Telemachus remained. And now Telemachus, by his father's direction went

and brought down into the hall armour and lances from the armoury: for Ulysses said, "On the morrow we shall have need of them." And moreover he said, "If any one shall ask why you have taken them down, say, it is to clean them and scour them from the rust which they have gathered since the owner of this house went for Troy." And as Telemachus stood by the armour, the lights were all gone out, and it was pitch-dark, and the armour gave out glistening beams as of fire, and he said to his father, "The pillars of the house are on fire." And his father said, "It is the gods who sit above the stars, and have power to make the night as light as the day." And he took it for a good omen. And Telemachus fell to cleaning and sharpening of the lances.

Now Ulysses had not seen his wife Penelope in all the time since his return; for the queen did not care to mingle with the suitors at their banquets, but, as became one that had been Ulysses' wife, kept much in private, spinning and doing her excellent housewiveries among her maids in the remote apartments of the palace. Only upon solemn days she would come down and show herself to the suitors. And Ulysses was filled with a longing desire to see his wife again, whom for twenty years he had not beheld, and he softly stole through the known passages of his beautiful house, till he came where the maids were lighting the queen through a stately gallery, that led to the chamber where she slept. And when the maids saw Ulysses, they said, "It is the beggar who came to the court to-day, about whom all that uproar was stirred up in the hall: what does he here?" But Penelope gave commandment that he should be brought before her, for she said, "It may be that he has travelled, and has heard something concerning Ulysses."

Then was Ulysses right glad to hear himself named by his queen, to find himself in nowise forgotten, nor her great love towards him decayed in all that time that he had been away. And he stood before his queen, and she knew him not to be Ulysses, but supposed that he had been some poor traveller. And she asked him of what country he was.

He told her (as he had before told to Eumæus) that he was a Cretan born, and however poor and cast down he now seemed, no less a man than brother to Idomeneus, who was grandson to king Minos, and though he now wanted bread, he had once had it in his power to feast Ulysses. Then he feigned how Ulysses, sailing for Troy, was forced by stress of weather to put his fleet in at a port of Crete, where for twelve days he was his guest, and entertained by him with all befitting guest-rites. And he described the very garments which Ulysses had on, by which Penelope knew that he had seen her lord.

In this manner Ulysses told his wife many tales of himself, at most but painting, but painting so near to the life, that the feeling of that which she took at her ears became so strong, that the kindly tears ran down her fair cheeks, while she thought upon her lord, dead she thought him, and heavily mourned the loss of him whom she missed, whom she could not find, though in very deed he stood so near her.

Ulysses was moved to see her weep, but he kept his own eyes as dry as iron or horn in their lids, putting a bridle upon his strong passion, that it should not issue to sight.

Then he told how he had lately been at the court of Thesprotia, and what he had learned concerning Ulysses there, in order as he had delivered to Eumæus: and Penelope was won to believe that there might be a possibility of Ulysses being alive, and she said, "I dreamed a dream this morning. Methought I had twenty household fowl which did eat wheat steeped in water from my hand, and there came suddenly from the clouds a crook-beaked hawk who soused on them and killed them all, trussing their necks, then took his flight back up to the clouds. And in my dream methought that I wept and made great moan for my fowls, and for the destruction which the hawk had made; and my maids came about me to comfort me. And in the height of

my griefs the hawk came back, and lighting upon the beam of my chamber, he said to me in a man's voice, which sounded strangely even in my dream, to hear a hawk to speak: 'Be of good cheer,' he said, 'O daughter of Icarius; for this is no dream which thou hast seen, but that which shall happen to thee indeed. Those household fowl which thou lamentest so without reason, are the suitors who devour thy substance, even as thou sawest the fowl eat from thy hand, and the hawk is thy husband, who is coming to give death to the suitors.' And I awoke, and went to see to my fowls if they were alive, whom I found eating wheat from their troughs, all well and safe as before my dream."

Then said Ulysses, "This dream can endure no other interpretation than that which the hawk gave to it, who is your lord, and who is coming quickly to effect all that his words told you."

"Your words," she said, "my old guest, are so sweet, that would you sit and please me with your speech, my ears would never let my eyes close their spheres for very joy of your discourse; but none that is merely mortal can live without the death of sleep, so the gods who are without death themselves have ordained it, to keep the memory of our mortality in our minds, while we experience that as much as we live we die every day: in which consideration I will ascend my bed, which I have nightly watered with my tears since he that was the joy of it departed for that bad city;" she so speaking, because she could not bring her lips to name the name of Troy so much hated. So for that night they parted, Penelope to her bed, and Ulysses to his son, and to the armour and the lances in the hall, where they sat up all night cleaning and watching by the armour.

## CHAPTER X.

The madness from above. The bow of Ulysses. The slaughter. The conclusion.

When daylight appeared, a tumultuous concourse of suitors again filled the hall; and some wondered, and some inquired what meant that glittering store of armour and lances which lay on heaps by the entry of the door; and to all that asked Telemachus made reply, that he had caused them to be taken down to cleanse them of the rust and of the stain which they had contracted by lying so long unused, even ever since his father went for Troy; and with that answer their minds were easily satisfied. So to their feasting and vain rioting again they fell. Ulysses by Telemachus's order had a seat and a mess assigned him in the door-way, and he had his eye ever on the lances. And it moved gall in some of the great ones there present, to have their feast still dulled with the society of that wretched beggar as they deemed him, and they reviled and spurned at him with their feet. Only there was one Philætius, who had something a better nature than the rest, that spake kindly to him, and had his age in respect. He coming up to Ulysses, took him by the hand with a kind of fear, as if touched exceedingly with imagination of his great worth, and said thus to him, "Hail! father stranger! my brows have sweat to see the injuries which you have received, and my eyes have broke forth in tears, when I have only thought that such being oftentimes the lot of worthiest men, to this plight Ulysses may be reduced, and that he now may wander from place to place as you do; for such who are compelled by need to range here and there, and have no firm home to fix their feet upon, God keeps them in this earth, as under water; so are they kept down and depressed. And a dark thread is sometimes spun in the fates of kings."

At this bare likening of the beggar to Ulysses, Minerva from heaven made the suitors for foolish joy to go mad, and roused them to such a laughter as would never stop, they laughed without power of ceasing, their eyes stood full

of tears for violent joys; but fears and horrible misgivings succeeded: and one among them stood up and prophesied: "Ah, wretches!" he said, "what madness from heaven has seized you, that you can laugh? see you not that your meat drops blood? a night, like the night of death, wraps you about, you shriek without knowing it; your eyes thrust forth tears; the fixed walls, and the beam that bears the whole house up, fall blood; ghosts choke up the entry; full is the hall with apparitions of murdered men; under your feet is hell; the sun falls from heaven, and it is midnight at noon." But like men whom the gods had infatuated to their destruction, they mocked at his fears, and Eurymachus said, "This man is surely mad, conduct him forth into the market-place, set him in the light, for he dreams that 'tis night within the house."

But Theoclymenus (for that was the prophet's name), whom Minerva had graced with a prophetic spirit, that he foreseeing might avoid the destruction which awaited them, answered and said: "Eurymachus, I will not require a guide of thee, for I have eyes and ears, the use of both my feet, and a sane mind within me, and with these I will go forth of the doors, because I know the imminent evils which await all you that stay, by reason of this poor guest who is a favourite with all the gods." So saying he turned his back upon those inhospitable men, and went away home, and never returned to the palace.

These words which he spoke were not unheard by Telemachus, who kept still his eye upon his father, expecting fervently when he would give the sign, which was to precede the slaughter of the suitors.

They dreaming of no such thing, fell sweetly to their dinner, as joying in the great store of banquet which was heaped in full tables about them; but there reigned not a bitterer banquet planet in all heaven, than that which hung over them this day by secret destination of Minerva.

There was a bow which Ulysses left when he went for Troy. It had lain by since that time, out of use and unstrung, for no man had strength to draw that bow, save Ulysses. So it had remained, as a monument of the great strength of its master. This bow, with the quiver of arrows belonging thereto, Telemachus had brought down from the armoury on the last night along with the lances; and now Minerva, intending to do Ulysses an honour, put it into the mind of Telemachus to propose to the suitors to try who was strongest to draw that bow; and he promised that to the man who should be able to draw that bow, his mother should be given in marriage; Ulysses' wife, the prize to him who should bend the bow of Ulysses.

There was great strife and emulation stirred up among the suitors at those words of the prince Telemachus. And to grace her son's words, and to confirm the promise which he had made, Penelope came and showed herself that day to the suitors; and Minerva made her that she appeared never so comely in their sight as that day, and they were inflamed with the beholding of so much beauty, proposed as the price of so great manhood; and they cried out, that if all those heroes who sailed to Colchos for the rich purchase of the golden-fleeced ram, had seen earth's richer prize, Penelope, they would not have made their voyage, but would have vowed their valours and their lives to her, for she was at all parts faultless.

And she said, "The gods have taken my beauty from me, since my lord went for Troy." But Telemachus willed his mother to depart and not be present at that contest, for he said, "It may be, some rougher strife shall chance of this, than may be expedient for a woman to witness." And she retired, she and her maids, and left the hall.

Then the bow was brought into the midst, and a mark was set up by prince Telemachus: and lord Antinous as the chief among the suitors had the first offer, and he took the bow and fitting an arrow to the string, he strove to bend it, but not with all his might and main could he once draw together the ends

of that tough bow: and when he found how vain a thing it was to endeavour to draw Ulysses' bow, he desisted, blushing for shame and for mere anger. Then Eurymachus adventured, but with no better success; but as it had torn the hands of Antinous, so did the bow tear and strain his hands, and marred his delicate fingers, yet could he not once stir the string. Then called he to the attendants to bring fat and unctuous matter, which melting at the fire, he dipped the bow therein, thinking to supple it and make it more pliable, but not with all the helps of art could he succeed in making it to move. After him Liodes, and Amphinomus, and Polybus, and Eurynomus, and Polyctorides, assayed their strength, but not any one of them, or of the rest of those aspiring suitors, had any better luck: yet not the meanest of them there but thought himself well worthy of Ulysses' wife, though to shoot with Ulysses' bow the completest champion among them was by proof found too feeble.

Then Ulysses prayed them that he might have leave to try; and immediately a clamour was raised among the suitors, because of his petition, and they scorned and swelled with rage at his presumption, and that a beggar should seek to contend in a game of such noble mastery. But Telemachus ordered that the bow should be given him, and that he should have leave to try, since they had failed; "for," he said, "the bow is mine, to give or to withhold:" and none durst gainsay the prince.

Then Ulysses gave a sign to his son, and he commanded the doors of the hall to be made fast, and all wondered at his words, but none could divine the cause. And Ulysses took the bow into his hands, and before he essayed to bend it, he surveyed it at all parts, to see whether, by long lying by, it had contracted any stiffness which hindered the drawing; and as he was busied in the curious surveying of his bow, some of the suitors mocked him and said, "Past doubt this man is a right cunning archer, and knows his craft well. See how he turns it over and over, and looks into it as if he could see through the wood." And others said, "We wish some one would tell out gold into our laps but for so long a time as he shall be in drawing of that string." But when he had spent some little time in making proof of the bow, and had found it to be in good plight, like as a harper in tuning of his harp draws out a string, with such ease or much more did Ulysses draw to the head the string of his own tough bow, and in letting of it go, it twanged with such a shrill noise as a swallow makes when it sings through the air; which so much amazed the suitors, that their colours came and went, and the skies gave out a noise of thunder, which at heart cheered Ulysses, for he knew that now his long labours by the disposal of the fates drew to an end. Then fitted he an arrow to the bow, and drawing it to the head, he sent it right to the mark which the prince had set up. Which done, he said to Telemachus, "You have got no disgrace yet by your guest, for I have struck the mark I shot at, and gave myself no such trouble in teasing the bow with fat and fire, as these men did, but have made proof that my strength is not impaired, nor my age so weak and contemptible as these were pleased to think it. But come, the day going down calls us to supper, after which succeed poem and harp, and all delights which use to crown princely banquetings."

So saying, he beckoned to his son, who straight girt his sword to his side, and took one of the lances (of which there lay great store from the armoury) in his hand, and armed at all points, advanced towards his father.

The upper rags which Ulysses wore fell from his shoulder, and his own kingly likeness returned, when he rushed to the great hall door with bow and quiver full of shafts, which down at his feet he poured, and in bitter words presignified his deadly intent to the suitors. "Thus far," he said, "this contest has been decided harmless: now for us there rests another mark, harder to hit, but which my hands shall essay notwithstanding, if Phœbus, god of

archers, be pleased to give me mastery." With that he left fly a deadly arrow at Antinous, which pierced him in the throat as he was in the act of lifting a cup of wine to his mouth. Amazement seized the suitors, as their great champion fell dead, and they raged highly against Ulysses, and said that it should prove the dearest shaft which he ever let fly, for he had slain a man, whose like breathed not in any part of the kingdom : and they flew to their arms, and would have seized the lances, but Minerva struck them with dimness of sight that they went erring up and down the hall, not knowing where to find them. Yet so infatuated where they by the displeasure of heaven, that they did not see the imminent peril which impended over them, but every man believed that this accident had happened beside the intention of the doer. Fools ! to think by shutting their eyes to evade destiny, or that any other cup remained for them, but that which their great Antinous had tasted !

Then Ulysses revealed himself to all in that presence, and that he was the man whom they held to be dead at Troy, whose palace they had usurped, whose wife in his lifetime they had sought in impious marriage, and that for this reason destruction was come upon them. And he dealt his deadly arrows among them, and there was no avoiding him, nor escaping from his horrid person, and Telemachus by his side plied them thick with those murderous lances from which there was no retreat, till fear itself made them valiant, and danger gave them eyes to understand the peril; then they which had swords drew them, and some with shields, that could find them, and some with tables and benches snatched up in haste, rose in a mass to overwhelm and crush those two; yet they singly bestirred themselves like men, and defended themselves against that great host, and through tables, shields and all, right through the arrows of Ulysses clove, and the irresistible lances of Telemachus; and many lay dead, and all had wounds, and Minerva in the likeness of a bird sate upon the beam which went across the hall, clapping her wings with a fearful noise, and sometimes the great bird would fly among them, cuffing at the swords, and at the lances, and up and down the hall would go, beating her wings, and troubling everything, that it was frigthful to behold, and it frayed the blood from the cheeks of those heaven-hated suitors : but to Ulysses and his son she appeared in her own divine similitude, with her snake-fringed shield, a goddess armed, fighting their battles. Nor did that dreadful pair desist, till they had laid all their foes at their feet. At their feet they lay in shoals ; like fishes, when the fishermen break up their nets, so they lay gasping and sprawling at the feet of Ulysses and his son. And Ulysses remembered the prediction of Tiresias, which said that he was to perish by his own guests, unless he slew those who knew him not.

Then certain of the queen's household went up and told Penelope what had happened, and how her lord Ulysses had come home, and had slain the suitors. But she gave no heed to their words, but thought that some frenzy possessed them, or that they mocked her: for it is the property of such extremes of sorrow as she had felt, not to believe when any great joy cometh. And she rated and chid them exceedingly for troubling her. But they the more persisted in their asseverations of the truth of what they had affirmed; and some of them had seen the slaughtered bodies of the suitors dragged forth of the hall. And they said, "That poor guest whom you talked with last night was Ulysses." Then she was yet more fully persuaded that they mocked her, and she wept. But they said, "This thing is true which we have told. We sat within, in an inner room in the palace, and the doors of the hall were shut on us, but we heard the cries and the groans of the men that were killed, but saw nothing, till at length your son called to us to come in, and entering we saw Ulysses standing in the midst of the slaughtered." But she persisting in her unbelief, said, that it was some god which had deceived them to think it was the person of Ulysses.

By this time Telemachus and his father had cleansed their hands from the slaughter, and were come to where the queen was talking with those of her household; and when she saw Ulysses, she stood motionless, and had no power to speak, sudden surprise and joy and fear and many passions so strove within her. Sometimes she was clear that it was her husband that she saw, and sometimes the alterations which twenty years had made in his person (yet that was not much) perplexed her that she knew not what to think, and for joy she could not believe; and yet for joy she would not but believe; and, above all, that sudden change from a beggar to a king troubled her, and wrought uneasy scruples in her mind. But Telemachus seeing her strangeness, blamed her, and called her an ungentle and tyrannous mother! and said that she showed a too great curiousness of modesty, to abstain from embracing his father, and to have doubts of his person, when to all present it was evident that he was the very real and true Ulysses.

Then she mistrusted no longer, but ran and fell upon Ulysses' neck, and said, "Let not my husband be angry, that I held off so long with strange delays; it is the gods, who severing us for so long time, have caused this unseemly distance in me. If Menelaus's wife had used half my caution, she would never have taken so freely to a stranger's bed; and she might have spared us all these plagues which have come upon us through her shameless deed."

These words with which Penelope excused herself, wrought more affection in Ulysses than if upon a first sight she had given up herself implicitly to his embraces; and he wept for joy to possess a wife so discreet, so answering to his own staid mind, that had a depth of wit proportioned to his own, and one that held chaste virtue at so high a price, and he thought the possession of such a one cheaply purchased with the loss of all Circe's delights, and Calypso's immortality of joys; and his long labours and his severe sufferings past seemed as nothing, now they were crowned with the enjoyment of his virtuous and true wife Penelope. And as sad men at sea whose ship has gone to pieces nigh shore, swimming for their lives, all drenched in foam and brine, crawl up to some poor patch of land, which they take possession of with as great a joy as if they had the world given them in fee, with such delight did this chaste wife cling to her lord restored, till the dark night fast coming on reminded her of that more intimate and happy union when in her long-widowed bed she should once again clasp a living Ulysses.

So from that time the land had rest from the suitors. And the happy Ithacans with songs and solemn sacrifices of praise to the gods celebrated the return of Ulysses: for he that had been so long absent was returned to wreak the evil upon the heads of the doers; in the place where they had done the evil, there wreaked he his vengeance upon them.

# Minor Tales.

## Juke Judkins.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1826.)

[This whimsical character sketch, as originally published in the *New Monthly*, was entitled more explicitly, "Reminiscences of Juke Judkins, Esq., of Birmingham."]

I AM the only son of a considerable brazier in Birmingham, who, dying in 1803, left me successor to the business, with no other encumbrance than a sort of rent-charge, which I am enjoined to pay out of it, of ninety-three pounds sterling *per annum*, to his widow, my mother: and which the improving state of the concern, I bless God, has hitherto enabled me to discharge with punctuality. (I say, I am enjoined to pay the said sum, but not strictly obligated: that is to say, as the will is worded, I believe the law would relieve me from the payment of it; but the wishes of a dying parent should in some sort have the effect of law). So that, though the annual profits of my business, on an average of the last three or four years, would appear to an indifferent observer, who should inspect my shop-books, to amount to the sum of one thousand three hundred and three pounds, odd shillings, the real proceeds in that time have fallen short of that sum to the amount of the aforesaid payment of ninety-three pounds sterling annually.

I was always my father's favourite. He took a delight, to the very last, in recounting the little sagacious tricks and innocent artifices of my childhood. One manifestation thereof I never heard him repeat without tears of joy trickling down his cheeks. It seems that when I quitted the parental roof (Aug. 27, 1788), being then six years and not quite a month old, to proceed to the Free School at Warwick, where my father was a sort of trustee, my mother—as mothers are usually provident on these occasions—had stuffed the pockets of the coach, which was to convey me and six more children of my own growth that were going to be entered along with me at the same seminary, with a prodigious quantity of gingerbread, which I remember my father said was more than was needed: and so indeed it was; for, if I had been to eat it all myself, it would have got stale and mouldy before it had been half spent. The consideration whereof set me upon my contrivances how I might secure to myself as much of the gingerbread as would keep good for the next two or three days, yet none of the rest in manner be wasted. I had a little pair of pocket compasses, which I usually carried about me for the purpose of making draughts and measurements, at which I was always very ingenious, of the various engines and mechanical inventions in which such a town as Birmingham abounded. By means of these, and a small penknife which my father had given me, I cut out the one half of the cake, calculating that the remainder would reasonably serve my turn; and subdividing it into many little slices, which were curious to see for the neatness and niceness of their proportion, I sold it out in so many pennyworths to my young companions as served us all the way to Warwick,

which is a distance of some twenty miles from this town : and very merry, I assure you, we made ourselves with it, feasting all the way. By this honest stratagem I put double the prime cost of the gingerbread into my purse, and secured as much as I thought would keep good and moist for my next two or three days' eating. When I told this to my parents on their first visit to me at Warwick, my father (good man) patted me on the cheek, and stroked my head, and seemed as if he could never make enough of me; but my mother unaccountably burst into tears, and said, "it was a very niggardly action," or some such expression, and that "she would rather it would please God to take me"—meaning (God help me!) that I should die—" than that she should live to see me grow up *a mean man* :" which shows the difference of parent from parent, and how some mothers are more harsh and intolerant to their children than some fathers ; when we might expect quite the contrary. My father, however, loaded me with presents from that time, which made me the envy of my school-fellows. As I felt this growing disposition in them, I naturally sought to avert it by all the means in my power : and from that time I used to eat my little packages of fruit, and other nice things, in a corner, so privately that I was never found out. Once, I remember, I had a huge apple sent me, of that sort which they call *cats'-heads*. I concealed this all day under my pillow; and at night, but not before I had ascertained that my bed-fellow was sound asleep,—which I did by pinching him rather smartly two or three times, which he seemed to perceive no more than a dead person, though once or twice he made a motion as if he would turn, which frightened me,—I say, when I had made all sure, I fell to work upon my apple; and, though it was as big as an ordinary man's two fists, I made shift to get through it before it was time to get up. And a more delicious feast I never made; thinking all night what a good parent I had (I mean my father) to send me so many nice things, when the poor lad that lay by me had no parent or friend in the world to send him anything nice ; and thinking of his desolate condition, I munched and munched as silently as I could, that I might not set him a-longing if he overheard me. And yet, for all this considerateness and attention to other people's feelings, I was never much a favourite with my school-fellows ; which I have often wondered at, seeing that I never defrauded any one of them of the value of a halfpenny, or told stories of them to their master, as some little lying boys would do, but was ready to do any of them all the services in my power, that were consistent with my own well-doing. I think nobody can be expected to go farther than that. But I am detaining my reader too long in recording my juvenile days. It is time I should go forward to a season when it became natural that I should have some thoughts of marrying, and, as they say, settling in the world. Nevertheless, my reflections on what I may call the boyish period of my life may have their use to some readers. It is pleasant to trace the man in the boy; to observe shoots of generosity in those young years; and to watch the progress of liberal sentiments, and what I may call a genteel way of thinking, which is discernible in some children at a very early age, and usually lays the foundation of all that is praiseworthy in the manly character afterwards.

With the warmest inclinations towards that way of life, and a serious conviction of its superior advantages over a single one, it has been the strange infelicity of my lot never to have entered into the respectable estate of matrimony. Yet I was once very near it. I courted a young woman in my twenty-seventh year; for so early I began to feel symptoms of the tender passion! She was well to do in the world, as they call it; but yet not such a fortune, as, all things considered, perhaps I might have pretended to. It was not my own choice altogether; but my mother very strongly pressed me to it. She was always putting it to me, that I had "comings-in sufficient,"—that I "need not stand upon a portion;" though the young woman, to do her justice, had considerable

expectations, which yet did not quite come up to my mark, as I told you before. My mother had this saying always in her mouth, that I had "money enough;" that it was time I enlarged my housekeeping, and to show a spirit befitting my circumstances. In short, what with her importunities, and my own desires *in part* co-operating,—for, as I said, I was not yet quite twenty-seven,—a time when the youthful feelings may be pardoned if they show a little impetuosity,—I resolved, I say, upon all these considerations, to set about the business of courting in right earnest. I was a young man then; and having a spice of romance in my character (as the reader has doubtless observed long ago), such as that sex is apt to be taken with, I had reason in no long time to think my addresses were anything but disagreeable. Certainly the happiest part of a young man's life is the time when he is going a-courting. All the generous impulses are then awake, and he feels a double existence in participating his hopes and wishes with another being. Return yet again for a brief moment, ye visionary views,—transient enchantments! ye moonlight rambles with Cleora in the Silent Walk at Vauxhall, (N.B.—About a mile from Birmingham, and resembling the gardens of that name near London, only that the price of admission is lower,) when the nightingale has suspended her notes in June to listen to our loving discourses, while the moon was overhead! (for we generally used to take our tea at Cleora's mother's before we set out, not so much to save expenses as to avoid the publicity of a repast in the gardens,—coming in much about the time of half-price, as they call it,)—ye soft intercommunions of soul, when exchanging mutual vows, we prattled of coming felicities! The loving disputes we have had under those trees, when this house (planning our future settlement) was rejected, because, though cheap, it was dull; and the other house was given up, because, though agreeably situated, it was too high-rented!—one was too much in the heart of the town, another was too far from business. These minutiæ will seem impertinent to the aged and the prudent. I write them only to the young. Young lovers, and passionate as being young (such were Cleora and I then), alone can understand me. After some weeks wasted, as I may now call it, in this sort of amorous colloquy, we at length fixed upon the house in the High Street, No. 203, just vacated by the death of Mr. Hutton of this town, for our future residence. I had all the time lived in lodgings (only renting a shop for business), to be near my mother,—near, I say: not in the same house; for that would have been to introduce confusion into our housekeeping, which it was desirable to keep separate. Oh the loving wrangles, the endearing differences, I had with Cleora, before we could quite make up our minds to the house that was to receive us!—I pretending, for argument's sake, the rent was too high, and she insisting that the taxes were moderate in proportion; and love at last reconciling us in the same choice. I think at that time, moderately speaking, she might have had anything out of me for asking. I do not, nor shall ever, regret that my character at that time was marked with a tinge of prodigality. Age comes fast enough upon us, and, in its good time, will prune away all that is inconvenient in these excesses. Perhaps it is right that it should do so. Matters, as I said, were ripening to a conclusion between us, only the house was yet not absolutely taken,—some necessary arrangements, which the ardour of my youthful impetuosity could hardly brook at that time (love and youth will be precipitate),—some preliminary arrangements, I say, with the landlord, respecting fixtures, very necessary things to be considered in a young man about to settle in the world, though not very accordant with the impatient state of my then passions,—some obstacles about the valuation of the fixtures,—had hitherto precluded (and I shall always think providentially) my final closes with his offer; when one of those accidents, which unimportant in themselves, often rise to give a turn to the most serious intentions of our life, intervened, and put an end at once to my projects of wiving and of housekeeping.

I was never much given to theatrical entertainments; that is, at no time of my life was I ever what they call a regular play-goer: but on some occasion of a benefit-night, which was expected to be very productive, and indeed turned out so, Cleora expressing a desire to be present, I could do no less than offer, as I did very willingly, to squire her and her mother to the pit. At that time it was not customary in our town for tradesfolk, except some of the very topping ones, to sit, as they now do, in the boxes. At the time appointed I waited upon the ladies, who had brought with them a young man, a distant relation, whom it seems they had invited to be of the party. This a little disconcerted me, as I had about me barely silver enough to pay for our three selves at the door, and did not at first know that their relation had proposed paying for himself. However, to do the young man justice, he not only paid for himself, but for the old lady besides; leaving me only to pay for two, as it were. In our passage to the theatre the notice of Cleora was attracted to some orange wenches that stood about the doors vending their commodities. She was leaning on my arm; and I could feel her every now and then giving me a nudge, as it is called, which I afterwards discovered were hints that I should buy some oranges. It seems it is a custom in Birmingham, and perhaps in other places, when a gentleman treats ladies to the play,—especially when a full night is expected. and that the house will be inconveniently warm,—to provide them with this kind of fruit, oranges being esteemed for their cooling property. But how could I guess at that, never having treated ladies to a play before, and being, as I said, quite a novice at entertainments of this kind? At last she spoke plain out, and begged that I would buy some of "those oranges," pointing to a particular barrow. But, when I came to examine the fruit, I did not think the quality of it was answerable to the price. In this way I handled several baskets of them; but something in them all displeased me. Some had thin rinds, and some were plainly over-ripe, which is as great a fault as not being ripe enough; and I could not (what they call) make a bargain. While I stood haggling with the woman, secretly determining to put off my purchase till I should get within the theatre, where I expected we should have better choice, the young man, the cousin (who, it seems, had left us without my missing him), came running to us with his pockets stuffed out with oranges, inside and out, as they say. It seems, not liking the look of the barrow-fruit any more than myself, he had slipped away to an eminent fruiterer's, about three doors distant, which I never had the sense to think of, and had laid out a matter of two shillings in some of the best St. Michael's, I think, I ever tasted. What a little hinge, as I said before, the most important affairs in life may turn upon! The mere inadvertence to the fact that there was an eminent fruiterer's within three doors of us, though we had just passed it without the thought once occurring to me, which he had taken advantage of, lost me the affection of my Cleora. From that time she visibly cooled towards me; and her partiality was as visibly transferred to this cousin. I was long unable to account for this change in her behaviour; when one day, accidentally discoursing of oranges to my mother, alone, she let drop a sort of reproach to me as if I had offended Cleora by my *nearness*, as she called it, that evening. Even now, when Cleora has been wedded some years to that same officious relation, as I may call him, I can hardly be persuaded that such a trifle could have been the motive to her inconstancy; for could she suppose that I would sacrifice my dearest hopes in her to the paltry sum of two shillings, when I was going to treat her to the play, and her mother too (an expense of more than four times that amount), if the young man had not interfered to pay for the latter, as I mentioned? But the caprices of the sex are past finding out: and I begin to think my mother was in the right; for doubtless women know women better than we can pretend to know them.

# The Defeat of Time;

## OR, A TALE OF THE FAIRIES.

(*William Hone's Table Book*, 1827.)

TITANIA and her moonlight elves were assembled under the canopy of a huge oak, that served to shelter them from the moon's radiance, which, being now at her full moon, shot forth intolerable rays,—intolerable I mean to the subtile texture of their little shadowy bodies,—but dispensing an agreeable coolness to us grosser mortals. An air of discomfort sate upon the queen and upon her courtiers. Their tiny friskings and gambols were forgot; and even Robin Goodfellow, for the first time in his little airy life, looked grave. For the queen had had melancholy forebodings of late, founded upon an ancient prophecy laid up in the records of Fairyland, that the date of fairy existence should be *then* extinct when men should cease to believe in them. And she knew how that the race of the Nymphs, which were her predecessors, and had been the guardians of the sacred floods, and of the silver fountains, and of the consecrated hills and woods, had utterly disappeared before the chilling touch of man's incredulity; and she sighed bitterly at the approaching fate of herself and of her subjects, which was dependent upon so fickle a lease as the capricious and ever-mutable faith of man. When, as if to realize her fears, a melancholy shape came gliding in, and *that* was—Time, who with his intolerable scythe mows down kings and kingdoms; at whose dread approach the fays huddled together as a flock of timorous sheep; and the most courageous among them crept into acorn-cups, not enduring the sight of that ancientest of monarchs. Titania's first impulse was to wish the presence of her false lord, King Oberon,—who was far away, in the pursuit of a strange beauty, a fay of Indian Land,—that with his good lance and sword, like a faithful knight and husband, he might defend her against Time. But she soon checked that thought as vain; for what could the prowess of the mighty Oberon himself, albeit the stoutest champion in Fairyland, have availed against so huge a giant, whose bald top touched the skies? So, in the mildest tone, she besought the spectre, that in his mercy he would overlook and pass by her small subjects, as too diminutive and powerless to add any worthy trophy to his renown. And she besought him to employ his resistless strength against the ambitious children of men, and to lay waste their aspiring works; to tumble down their towers and turrets, and the Babels of their pride,—fit objects of his devouring scythe,—but to spare her and her harmless race, who had no existence beyond a dream; frail objects of a creed that lived but in the faith of the believer. And with her little arms, as well as she could, she grasped the stern knees of Time; and, waxing speechless with fear, she beckoned to her chief attendants and maids of honour to come forth from ther hiding-places, and to plead the plea of the fairies. And one of those small, delicate creatures came forth at her bidding, clad all in white like a chorister, and in a low melodious tone, not louder than the hum of a pretty bee—when it seems to be demurring whether it shall settle upon this sweet flower or that before it settles,—set forth her humble petition. "We fairies," she said, "are the most inoffensive race that live, and least deserving to perish. It is we that have the care of all sweet

melodies that no discords may offend the sun, who is the great soul of music. We rouse the lark at moin; and the pretty Echoes, which respond to all the twittering choir, are of our making. Wherefore, great King of Years, as ever you have loved the music which is raining from a morning cloud sent from the messenger of day, the lark, as he mounts to heaven's gate, beyond the ken of mortals; or if ever you have listened with a charmed ear to the night-bird, that—

> "'In the flowery spring,
> Amidst the leaves set, makes the thickets ring
> Of our sour sorrows, sweeten'd with her song—'

spare our tender tribes, and we will muffle up the sheep-bell for thee, that thy pleasure take no interruption whenever thou shalt listen unto Philomel."

And Time answered, that "he had heard that song too long; and he was even wearied with that ancient strain that recorded the wrong of Tereus. But, if she would know in what music Time delighted, it was, when sleep and darkness lay upon crowded cities, to hark to the midnight chime which is tolling from a hundred clocks, like the last knell over the soul of a dead world; or to the crush of the fall of some age-worn edifice, which is as the voice of himself when he disparteth kingdoms."

A second female fay took up the plea, and said, "We be the handmaids of the Spring, and tend upon the birth of all sweet buds: and the pastoral cowslips are our friends; and the pansies and the violets, like nuns; and the quaking harebell is in our wardship; and the hyacinth, once a fair youth, and dear to Phœbus."

Then Time made answer, in his wrath striking the harmless ground with his hurtful scythe, that "they must not think that he was one that cared for flowers, except to see them wither, and to take her beauty from the rose."

And a third fairy took up the plea, and said, "We are kindly things: and it is we that sit at evening, and shake rich odours from sweet bowers upon discoursing lovers, that seem to each other to be their own sighs; and we keep off the bat and the owl from their privacy, and the ill-boding whistler; and we flit in sweet dreams across the brains of infancy, and conjure up a smile upon its soft lips to beguile the careful mother, while its little soul is fled for a brief minute or two to sport with our youngest fairies."

Then Saturn (which is Time) made answer, that "they should not think that he delighted in tender babes, that had devoured his own, till foolish Rhea cheated him with a stone, which he swallowed, thinking it to be the infant Jupiter." And thereat, in token, he disclosed to view his enormous tooth, in which appeared monstrous dents left by that unnatural meal; and his great throat, that seemed capable of devouring up the earth and all its inhabitants at one meal. "And for lovers," he continued, "my delight is, with a hurrying hand to snatch them away from their love-meetings by stealth at nights; and, in absence, to stand like a motionless statue, or their leaden planet of mishap (whence I had my name), till I make their minutes seem ages."

Next stood up a male fairy, clad all in green, like a forester or one of Robin Hood's mates, and, doffing his tiny cap, said, "We are small foresters, that live in woods, training the young boughs in graceful intricacies, with blue snatches of the sky between: we frame all shady roofs and arches rude; and sometimes, when we are plying our tender hatchets, men say that the tapping woodpecker is nigh. And it is we that scoop the hollow cell of the squirrel, and carve quaint letters upon the rinds of trees, which in sylvan solitudes sweetly recall to the mind of the heat-oppressed swain, ere he lies down to slumber, the name of his fair one, dainty Aminta, gentle Rosalind, or chastest Laura, as it may happen."

Saturn, nothing moved with this courteous address, bade him be gone, or,

"if he would be a woodman, to go forth and fell oak for the fairies' coffins which would forthwith be wanting. For himself he took no delight in haunting the woods, till their golden plumage (the yellow leaves) were beginning to fall, and leave the brown-black limbs bare, like Nature in her skeleton dress."

Then stood up one of those gentle fairies that are good to man, and blushed red as any rose while he told a modest story of one of his own good deeds. "It chanced upon a time," he said, "that while we were looking cowslips in the meads, while yet the dew was hanging on the buds like beads, we found a babe left in its swathing-clothes,—a little sorrowful, deserted thing, begot of love, but begetting no love in others; guiltless of shame, but doomed to shame for its parents' offence in bringing it by indirect courses into the world. It was pity to see the abandoned little orphan left to the world's care by an unnatural mother. How the cold dew kept wetting its childish coats! and its little hair, how it was bedabbled, that was like gossamer! Its pouting mouth, unknowing how to speak, lay half opened like a rose-lipped shell; and its cheek was softer than any peach, upon which the tears, for very roundness, could not long dwell, but fell off, in clearness like pearls,—some on the grass, and some on his little hand; and some haply wandered to the little dimpled well under his mouth, which Love himself seemed to have planned out, but less for tears than for smilings. Pity, it was, too, to see how the burning sun had scorched its helpless limbs; for it lay without shade or shelter, or mother's breast, for foul weather or fair. So, having compassion on its sad plight, my fellows and I turned ourselves into grasshoppers, and swarmed about the babe, making such shrill cries as that pretty little chirping creature makes in its mirth, till with our noise we attracted the attention of a passing rustic, a tender-hearted hind, who, wondering at our small but loud concert, strayed aside curiously, and found the babe, where it lay in the remote grass, and taking it up, lapped it in his russet coat, and bore it to his cottage, where his wife kindly nurtured it till it grew up a goodly personage. How this babe prospered afterwards, let proud London tell. This was that famous Sir Thomas Gresham, who was the chiefest of her merchants, the richest, the wisest. Witness his many goodly vessels on the Thames, freighted with costly merchandise, jewels from Ind, and pearls for courtly dames, and silks of Samarcand. And witness, more than all, that stately Bourse (or Exchange) which he caused to be built a mart for merchants from east and west, whose graceful summit still bears in token of the faries' favours, his chosen crest, the grasshopper. And, like the grasshopper, may it please you, great king, to suffer us also to live, partakers of the green earth!"

The fairy had scarce ended his plea, when a shrill cry, not unlike the grasshopper's, was heard. Poor Puck—or Robin Goodfellow, as he is sometimes called—had recovered a little from his first fright, and, in one of his mad freaks, had perched upon the beard of old Time, which was flowing, ample, and majestic; and was amusing himself with plucking at a hair, which was indeed so massy, that it seemed to him that he was removing some huge beam of timber, rather than a hair: which Time, by some ill chance perceiving, snatched up the impish mischief with his great hand, and asked what it was.

"Alas!" quoth Puck, "a little random elf am I, born in one of Nature's sports; a very weed, created for the simple, sweet enjoyment of myself, but for no other purpose, worth, or need, that ever I could learn. 'Tis I that bob the angler's idle cork, till the patient man is ready to breathe a curse. I steal the morsel from the gossip's fork, or stop the sneezing chanter in mid psalm; and when an infant has been born with hard or homely features, mothers say I changed the child at nurse: but to fulfil any graver purpose I have not wit enough, and hardly the will. I am a pinch of lively dust to frisk upon the wind: a tear would make a puddle of me; and so I tickle myself with the

lightest straw, and shun all griefs that might make me stagnant. This is my small philosophy."

Then Time, dropping him on the ground, as a thing too inconsiderable for his vengeance, grasped fast his mighty scythe: and now, not Puck alone, but the whole state of fairies, had gone to inevitable wreck and destruction, had not a timely apparition interposed, at whose boldness Time was astounded; for he came not with the habit or the forces of a deity, who alone might cope with Time, but as a simple mortal, clad as you might see a forester that hunts after wild conies by the cold moonshine; or a stalker of stray deer, stealthy and bold. But by the golden lustre in his eye, and the passionate wanness n his cheek, and by the fair and ample space of his forehead, which seemed a palace framed for the habitation of all glorious thoughts, he knew that this was his great rival, who had power given him to rescue whatsoever victims Time should clutch, and to cause them to live for ever in his immortal verse. And, muttering the name of Shakspere, Time spread his roc-like wings, and fled the controlling presence; and the liberated court of the fairies, with Titania at their head, flocked around the gentle ghost, giving him thanks, nodding to him, and doing him courtesies, who had crowned them henceforth with a permanent existence, to live in the minds of men, while verse shall have power to charm, or midsummer moons shall brighten.

* * * * * * * * *

What particular endearments passed between the fairies and their poet, passes my pencil to delineate; but, if you are curious to be informed, I must refer you, gentle reader, to the "Plea of the Midsummer Fairies," a most agreeable poem lately put forth by my friend Thomas Hood; of the first half of which the above is nothing but a meagre and harsh prose abstract. Farewell!

*The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo.*

# The Essays of Elia.

[The inimitable ESSAYS OF ELIA—Charles Lamb's masterpiece—came from the press originally in a collected form, as a bright little volume entitled "Elia. Essays which have appeared under that signature in the *London Magazine*." It was published in 1823, at 95, Fleet Street, by Messrs. Taylor and Hessey. Eleven years afterwards, before its author's death, it was already out of print, a stray copy only by rare chance being purchaseable at a book stall. The Note to the Publisher, the Dedication to the Reader, and the Obituary of Elia, all of which are here subjoined, will speak for themselves.]

*To J. Taylor, Esq.*

Dear Sir,

I should like the enclosed Dedication to be printed, unless you dislike it. I like it. It is in the olden style. But if you object to it, put forth the book as it is.

Only pray don't let the Printer mistake the word *curt* for *curst*.

*Dec.* 7, 1822. C. L.

## DEDICATION.

### TO THE FRIENDLY AND JUDICIOUS READER.

WHO will take these Papers as they were meant; not understanding every thing perseverely in the absolute and literal sense, but giving fair construction as to an after-dinner conversation; allowing for the rashness and necessary incompleteness of first thoughts; and not remembering, for the purpose of an after taunt, words spoken peradventure after the fourth glass. The Author wishes (what he would will for himself) plenty of good friends to stand by him, good books to solace him, prosperous events to all his honest undertakings, and a candid interpretation to his most hasty words and actions. The other sort (and he hopes many of them will purchase his book too) he greets with the curt invitation of Timon, "Uncover, dogs, and lap:" or he dismisses them with the confident security of the philosopher, "You beat but on the case of

*Dec.* 7, 1822. "ELIA."

POOR ELIA—The real (for I am but a counterfeit) is dead. The fact is, a person of that name, an Italian, was a fellow clerk of mine at the South Sea House thirty (not forty) years ago, when the characters I described there existed, but had left it like myself many years; and I having a brother now there, and doubting how he might relish certain descriptions in it, I clapped down the name of Elia to it, which passed off pretty well, for Elia himself added the function of an author to that of a scrivener like myself. I went the other day (not having seen him for a year) to laugh over with him at my usurpation of his name, and found him, alas! no more than a name, for he died of consumption eleven months ago, and I knew not of it.

So the name has fairly devolved to me, I think; and 'tis all he has left me.

*June 30th*, 1821. C. LAMB.

# The South-Sea House.

(*The London Magazine*, August, 1820.)

[As originally printed, this paper was rather more explicitly entitled, "Recollections of the South-Sea House."]

READER, in thy passage from the Bank—where thou hast been receiving thy half-yearly dividends (supposing thou art a lean annuitant like myself)—to the Flower Pot, to secure a place for Dalston, or Shacklewell, or some other thy suburban retreat northerly,—didst thou never observe a melancholy-looking, handsome, brick and stone edifice, to the left—where Threadneedle Street abuts upon Bishopsgate? I dare say thou hast often admired its magnificent portals ever gaping wide, and disclosing to view a grave court, with cloisters, and pillars, with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out—a desolation something like Balclutha's.*

This was once a house of trade,—a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here—the quick pulse of gain—and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticoes; imposing staircases; offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces—deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks; the still more sacred interiors of court and committee-rooms, with venerable faces of beadles, door-keepers—directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend), at long worm-eaten tables, that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt-leather coverings, supporting massy silver inkstands long since dry;—the oaken wainscots hung with pictures of deceased governors and sub-governors, of Queen Anne, and the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty;—huge charts, which subsequent discoveries have antiquated;—dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams,—and soundings of the Bay of Panama!—The long passages hung with buckets, appended, in idle row, to walls, whose substance might defy any, short of the last conflagration:—with vast ranges of cellarage under all, where dollars and pieces of eight once lay, an "unsunned heap," for Mammon to have solaced his solitary heart withal,—long since dissipated, or scattered into air at the blast of the breaking of that famous BUBBLE.——

Such is the SOUTH-SEA HOUSE. At least, such it was forty years ago, when I knew it,—a magnificent relic! What alterations may have been made in it since, I have had no opportunities of verifying. Time, I take for granted, has not freshened it. No wind has resuscitated the face of the sleeping waters. A thicker crust by this time stagnates upon it. The moths, that were then battening upon its obsolete ledgers and day-books, have rested from their depredations, but other light generations have succeeded, making fine fretwork among their single and double entries. Layers of dust have accumulated (a superfœtation of dirt!) upon the old layers, that seldom used to be disturbed, save by some curious finger, now and then, inquisitive to explore the mode of book-keeping in Queen Anne's reign; or, with less hallowed curiosity, seeking

* I passed by the walls of Balclutha, and they were desolate.—OSSIAN.

to unveil some of the mysteries of that tremendous HOAX, whose extent the petty peculators of our day look back upon with the same expression of incredulous admiration, and hopeless ambition of rivalry, as would become the puny face of modern conspiracy contemplating the Titan size of Vaux's superhuman plot.

Peace to the manes of the BUBBLE! Silence and destitution are upon thy walls, proud house, for a memorial!

Situated as thou art, in the very heart of stirring and living commerce,—amid the fret and fever of speculation—with the Bank, and the 'Change, and the India House about thee, in the hey-day of present prosperity, with their important faces, as it were, insulting thee, their *poor neighbour out of business*—to the idle and merely contemplative,—to such as me, old house! there is a charm in thy quiet:—a cessation—a coolness from business—an indolence almost cloistral—which is delightful! With what reverence have I paced thy great bare rooms and courts at eventide! They spoke of the past:—the shade of some dead accountant, with visionary pen in ear, would flit by me, stiff as in life. Living accounts and accountants puzzle me. I have no skill in figuring. But thy great dead tomes, which scarce three degenerate clerks of the present day could lift from their enshrining shelves—with their old fantastic flourishes, and decorative rubric interlacings—their sums in triple columniations, set down with formal superfluity of cyphers—with pious sentences at the beginning, without which our religious ancestors never ventured to open a book of business, or bill of lading—the costly vellum covers of some of them almost persuading us that we are got into some *better library*,—are very agreeable and edifying spectacles. I can look upon these defunct dragons with complacency. Thy heavy odd-shaped ivory-handled penknives (our ancestors had everything on a larger scale than we have hearts for) are as good as anything from Herculaneum. The pounce-boxes of our days have gone retrograde.

The very clerks which I remember in the South-Sea House—I speak of forty years back—had an air very different from those in the public offices that I have had to do with since. They partook of the genius of the place!

There were mostly (for the establishment did not admit of superfluous salaries) bachelors. Generally (for they had not much to do) persons of a curious and speculative turn of mind. Old-fashioned, for a reason mentioned before. Humorists, for they were of all descriptions; and, not having been brought together in early life (which has a tendency to assimilate the members of corporate bodies to each other), but, for the most part, placed in this house in ripe or middle age, they necessarily carried into it their separate habits and oddities, unqualified, if I may so speak, as into a common stock. Hence they formed a sort of Noah's ark. Odd fishes. A lay-monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house, kept more for show than use. Yet pleasant fellows, full of chat—and not a few among them had arrived at considerable proficiency on the German flute.

The cashier at that time was one Evans, a Cambro-Briton. He had something of the choleric complexion of his countrymen stamped on his visage, but was a worthy sensible man at bottom. He wore his hair, to the last, powdered and frizzed out, in the fashion which I remember to have seen in caricatures of what were termed, in my young days, *Maccaronies*. He was the last of that race of beaux. Melancholy as a gib-cat over his counter all the forenoon, I think I see him making up his cash (as they call it) with tremulous fingers, as if he feared every one about him was a defaulter; in his hypochondry ready to imagine himself one; haunted, at least, with the idea of the possibility of his becoming one: his tristful visage clearing up a little over his roast neck of veal at Anderton's at two (where his picture still hangs, taken a little before his death by desire of the master of the coffee-house, which he had frequented for the last five-and-twenty years), but not attaining the meridian of its animation till evening brought on the hour of tea and visiting. The

simultaneous sound of his well-known rap at the door with the stroke of the clock announcing six, was a topic of never-failing mirth in the families which this dear old bachelor gladdened with his presence. Then was his *forte*, his glorified hour! How would he chirp, and expand over a muffin! How would he dilate into secret history! His countryman Pennant himself, in particular, could not be more eloquent than he in relation to old and new London—the site of old theatres, churches, streets gone to decay—where Rosamond's pond stood—the Mulberry Gardens—and the Conduit in Cheap—with many a pleasant anecdote, derived from paternal tradition, of those grotesque figures which Hogarth has immortalized in his picture of *Noon*,—the worthy descendants of those heroic confessors, who, flying to this country, from the wrath of Louis the Fourteenth and his dragoons, kept alive the flame of pure religion in the sheltering obscurities of Hog Lane, and the vicinity of the Seven Dials!

Deputy, under Evans, was Thomas Tame. He had the air and stoop of a nobleman. You would have taken him for one, had you met him in one of the passages leading to Westminster Hall. By stoop I mean that gentle bending of the body forwards, which, in great men, must be supposed to be the effect of an habitual condescending attention to the applications of their inferiors. While he held you in converse, you felt strained to the height in the colloquy. The conference over, you were at leisure to smile at the comparative insignificance of the pretensions which had just awed you. His intellect was of the shallowest order. It did not reach to a saw or a proverb. His mind was in its original state of white paper. A sucking babe might have posed him. What was it then? Was he rich? Alas, no! Thomas Tame was very poor. Both he and his wife looked outwardly gentlefolks, when I fear all was not well at all times within. She had a neat meagre person, which it was evident she had not sinned in over-pampering; but in its veins was noble blood. She traced her descent, by some labyrinth of relationship, which I never thoroughly understood,—much less can explain with any heraldic certainty at this time of day,—to the illustrious, but unfortunate house of Derwentwater. This was the secret of Thomas's stoop. This was the thought—the sentiment—the bright solitary star of your lives,—ye mild and happy pair,—which cheered you in the night of intellect, and in the obscurity of your station! This was to you instead of riches, instead of rank, instead of glittering attainments: and it was worth them all together. You insulted none with it; but, while you wore it as a piece of defensive armour only, no insult likewise could reach you through it. *Decus et solamen.*

Of quite another stamp was the then accountant, John Tipp. He neither pretended to high blood, nor in good truth cared one fig about the matter. He "thought an accountant the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest accountant in it." Yet John was not without his hobby. The fiddle relieved his vacant hours. He sang, certainly, with other notes than to the Orphean lyre. He did, indeed, scream and scrape most abominably. His fine suite of official rooms in Threadneedle Street, which, without anything very substantial appended to them, were enough to enlarge a man's notions of himself that lived in them—(I know not who is the occupier of them now*)—resounded fortnightly to the notes of a concert of "sweet breasts," as our ancestors would have called them, culled from club-rooms and orchestras—chorus singers—first and second violoncellos—double basses—and clarionets—who ate his cold mutton, and drank his punch, and praised his ear. He sate like Lord Midas among them. But at the desk Tipp was quite another sort of

* [I have since been informed, that the present tenant of them is a Mr. Lamb, a gentleman who is happy in the possession of some choice pictures, and among them a rare portrait of Milton, which I mean to do myself the pleasure of going to see, and at the same time to refresh my memory with the sight of old scenes. Mr. Lamb has the character of a right courteous and communicative collector.]

creature. Thence all ideas, that were purely ornamental, were banished. You could not speak of anything romantic without rebuke. Politics were excluded. A newspaper was thought too refined and abstracted. The whole duty of man consisted in writing off dividend warrants. The striking of the annual balance in the company's books (which, perhaps, differed from the balance of last year in the sum of £25 1s. 6d.) occupied his days and nights for a month previous. Not that Tipp was blind to the deadness of *things* (as they call them in the city) in his beloved house, or did not sigh for a return of the old stirring days when South-Sea hopes were young—(he was indeed equal to the wielding of any the most intricate accounts of the most flourishing company in these or those days):—but to a genuine accountant the difference of proceeds is as nothing. The fractional farthing is as dear to his heart as the thousands which stand before it. He is the true actor, who, whether his part be a prince or a peasant, must act it with like intensity. With Tipp form was everything. His life was formal. His actions seemed ruled with a ruler. His pen was not less erring than his heart. He made the best executor in the world: he was plagued with incessant executorships accordingly, which excited his spleen and soothed his vanity in equal ratios. He would swear (for Tipp swore) at the little orphans, whose rights he would guard with a tenacity like the grasp of the dying hand that commended their interests to his protection. With all this there was about him a sort of timidity—(his few enemies used to give it a worse name)—a something which, in reverence to the dead, we will place, if you please, a little on this side of the heroic. Nature certainly had been pleased to endow John Tipp with a sufficient measure of the principle of self-preservation. There is a cowardice which we do not despise, because it has nothing base or treacherous in its elements; it betrays itself, not you: it is mere temperament; the absence of the romantic and the enterprising; it sees a lion in the way, and will not, with Fortinbras, "greatly find quarrel in a straw," when some supposed honour is at stake. Tipp never mounted the box of a stage-coach in his life; or leaned against the rails of a balcony; or walked upon the ridge of a parapet; or looked down a precipice; or let off a gun; or went upon a water-party; or would willingly let you go if he could have helped it: neither was it recorded of him, that for lucre, or for intimidation, he ever forsook friend or principle.

Whom next shall we summon from the dusty dead, in whom common qualities become uncommon? Can I forget thee, Henry Man, the wit, the polished man of letters, the *author*, of the South-Sea House? who never enteredst thy office in a morning, or quittedst it in mid-day—(what didst *thou* in an office?)—without some quirk that left a sting! Thy gibes and thy jokes are now extinct, or survive but in two forgotten volumes, which I had the good fortune to rescue from a stall in Barbican, not three days ago, and found thee terse, fresh, epigrammatic, as alive. Thy wit is a little gone by in these fastidious days—thy topics are staled by the "new-born gauds" of the time:—but great thou used to be in Public Ledgers, and in Chronicles, upon Chatham and Shelburne, and Rockingham, and Howe, and Burgoyne, and Clinton, and the war which ended in the tearing from Great Britain her rebellious colonies, —and Keppel, and Wilkes, and Sawbridge, and Bull, and Dunning, and Pratt, and Richmond,—and such small politics.——

A little less facetious, and a great deal more obstreperous, was fine rattling, rattleheaded Plumer. He was descended,—not in a right line, reader (for his lineal pretensions, like his personal, favoured a little of the sinister bend), from the Plumers of Hertfordshire. So tradition gave him out; and certain family features not a little sanctioned the opinion. Certainly old Walter Plumer (his reputed author) had been a rake in his days, and visited much in Italy, and had seen the world. He was uncle, bachelor-uncle, to the fine old Whig still living, who has represented the county in so many successive parliaments,

and has a fine old mansion near Ware. Walter flourished in George the Second's days, and was the same who was summoned before the House of Commons about a business of franks, with the old Duchess of Marlborough. You may read of it in Johnson's Life of Cave. Cave came off cleverly in that business. It is certain our Plumer did nothing to discountenance the rumour. He rather seemed pleased whenever it was, with all gentleness, insinuated. But, besides his family pretensions, Plumer was an engaging fellow, and sang gloriously.——

Not so sweetly sang Plumber as thou sangest, mild, child-like, pastoral M—— ; a flute's breathing less divinely whispering than thy Arcadian melodies, when in tones worthy of Arden, thou didst chant that song sung by Amiens to the banished Duke, which proclaims the winter wind more lenient than for a man to be ungrateful. Thy sire was old surly M——, the unapproachable churchwarden of Bishopsgate. He knew not what he did, when he begat thee, like spring, gentle offspring of blustering winter :—only unfortunate in thy ending, which should have been mild, conciliatory, swan-like.——

Much remains to sing. Many fantastic shapes rise up, but they must be mine in private :—already I have fooled the reader to the top of his bent;—else could I omit that strange creature Woollett, who existed in trying the question, and *bought litigations?*—and still stranger, inimitable, solemn Hepworth, from whose gravity Newton might have deduced the law of gravitation. How profoundly would he nib a pen—with what deliberation would he wet a wafer!——

But it is time to close—night's wheels are rattling fast over me—it is proper to have done with this solemn mockery.

Reader, what if I have been playing with thee all this while—peradventure the very *names*, which I have summoned up before thee, are fantastic, insubstantial—like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece :——

Be satisfied that something answering to them has had a being. Their importance is from the past.

# Oxford in the Vacation.

(*The London Magazine*, October, 1820.)

[Elia, upon his second appearance, came fairly to the front, his contribution assuming the place of honour as the first article in that number of the *London*. The paper, as there given, was dated at the close of it, "August 5th, 1820. From my rooms facing the Bodleian." "G. D." was George Dyer, author of a "History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge." "L——," referred to in the last bracketed note, meant Charles Lamb himself, who had actually perpetrated the joke there named at the expense of Dyer's credulity.]

CASTING a preparatory glance at the bottom of this article, as the wary connoisseur in prints, with cursory eye (which, while it reads, seems as though it read not), never fails to consult the *quis sculpsit* in the corner, before he pronounces some rare piece to be a Vivares, or a Woollet——methinks I hear you exclaim, reader, *Who is Elia?*

Because in my last I tried to divert thee with some half-forgotten humours of some old clerks defunct, in an old house of business, long since gone to decay, doubtless you have already set me down in your mind as one of the self-same college—a votary of the desk—a notched and cropt scrivener—one that sucks his sustenance, as certain sick people are said to do, through a quill.

Well, I do agnize something of the sort. I confess that it is my humour, my fancy—in the forepart of the day, when the mind of your man of letters requires some relaxation—(and none better than such as at first sight seems most abhorrent from his beloved studies)—to while away some good hours of my time in the contemplation of indigoes, cottons, raw silks, piece-goods, flowered or otherwise. In the first place . . . . . . and then it sends you home with such increased appetite to your books . . . . . . not to say, that your outside sheets, and waste wrappers of foolscap, do receive into them, most kindly and naturally, the impression of sonnets, epigrams, *essays*—so that the very parings of a counting-house are, in some sort, the settings up of an author. The enfranchised quill, that has plodded all the morning among the cart-rucks of figures and cyphers, frisks and curvets so at its ease over the flowery carpet-ground of a midnight dissertation. It feels its promotion. . . . . . . So that you see, upon the whole, the literary dignity of *Elia* is very little, if at all, compromised in the condescension.

Not that, in my anxious detail of the many commodities incidental to the life of a public office, I would be thought blind to certain flaws, which a cunning carper might be able to pick in this Joseph's vest. And here I must have leave, in the fulness of my soul, to regret the abolition, and doing-away with altogether, of those consolatory interstices, and sprinklings of freedom, through the four seasons,—the *red-letter days*, now become, to all intents and purposes, *dead-letter days*. There was Paul, and Stephen, and Barnabas—

> Andrew and John, men famous in old times;

—we were used to keep all their days holy, as long back as I was at school at Christ's. I remember their effigies, by the same token, in the old *Basket* Prayer-book. There hung Peter in his uneasy posture—holy Bartlemy in the troublesome act of flaying, after the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti.—I honoured them all, and could almost have wept the defalcation of Iscariot—so much did we love to keep holy memories sacred :—only methought I a little grudged at the coalition of the *better Jude* with Simon—clubbing (as it were) their sanctities together, to make up one poor gaudy-day between them—as an economy unworthy of the dispensation.

These were bright visitations in a scholar's and a clerk's life—"far off their coming shone."—I was as good as an almanac in those days. I could have told you such a saint's-day falls out next week, or the week after. Peradventnre the Epiphany, by some periodical infelicity, would, once in six years, merge in a Sabbath. Now am I little better than one of the profane. Let me not be thought to arraign the wisdom of my civil superiors, who have judged the further observation of these holy tides to be papistical, superstitious. Only in a custom of such long standing, methinks, if their Holinesses the Bishops had, in decency, been first sounded—but I am wading out of my depths. I am not the man to decide the limits of civil and ecclesiastical authority—I am plain Elia—no Selden, nor Archbishop Usher—though at present in the thick of their books, here in the heart of learning, under the shadow of the mighty Bodley.

I can here play the gentleman, enact the student. To such a one as myself, who has been defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution, nowhere is so pleasant, to while away a few idle weeks at, as one or other of the Universities. Their vacation, too, at this time of the year,

falls in so pat with *ours*. Here I can take my walks unmolested, and fancy myself of what degree or standing I please. I seem admitted *ad eundem*. I fetch up past opportunities. I can rise at the chapel-bell, and dream that it rings for *me*. In moods of humility I can be a Sizar, or a Servitor. When the peacock vein rises, I strut a Gentleman Commoner. In graver moments, I proceed Master of Arts. Indeed I do not think I am much unlike that respectable character. I have seen your dim-eyed vergers, and bed-makers in spectacles, drop a bow or curtsey, as I pass, wisely mistaking me for something of the sort. I go about in black, which favours the notion. Only in Christ Church reverend quadrangle, I can be content to pass for nothing short of a Seraphic Doctor.

The walks at these times are so much one's own,—the tall trees of Christ's, the groves of Magdalen! The halls deserted, and with open doors, inviting one to slip in unperceived, and pay a devoir to some Founder, or noble or royal Benefactress (that should have been ours) whose portrait seems to smile upon their over-looked beadsman, and to adopt me for their own. Then, to take a peep in by the way at the butteries, and sculleries, redolent of antique hospitality: the immense caves of kitchens, kitchen fire-places, cordial recesses; ovens whose first pies were baked four centuries ago; and spits which have cooked for Chaucer! Not the meanest minister among the dishes but is hallowed to me through his imagination, and the Cook goes forth a Manciple.

Antiquity! thou wondrous charm, what art thou? that, being nothing, art everything! When thou *wert*, thou wert not antiquity—then thou wert nothing, but hadst a remoter *antiquity*, as thou calledst it, to look back to with blind veneration; thou thyself being to thyself flat, jejune, *modern!* What mystery lurks in this retroversion? or what half Januses * are we, that cannot look forward with the same idolatry with which we for ever revert! The mighty future is as nothing, being everything! the past is everything, being nothing!

What were thy *dark ages?* Surely the sun rose as brightly then as now, and man got him to his work in the morning. Why is it that we can never hear mention of them without an accompanying feeling, as though a palpable obscure had dimmed the face of things, and that our ancestors wandered to and fro groping!

Above all thy rarities, old Oxenford, what do most arride and solace me, are thy repositories of mouldering learning, thy shelves——

What a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers, that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those sciential apples which grew amid the happy orchard.

Still less have I curiosity to disturb the elder repose of MSS.† Those *variæ*

* Januses of one face.—Sir Thomas Browne.

† [There is something to me repugnant at any time in written hand. The text never seems determinate. Print settles it. I had thought of the Lycidas as of a full-grown beauty—as springing up with all its parts absolute—till, in an evil hour, I was shown the original written copy of it, together with the other minor poems of its author, in the library of Trinity, kept like some treasure, to be proud of. I wish they had thrown them in the Cam, or sent them after the latter cantos of Spenser, into the Irish Channel. How it staggered me to see the fine things in their ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displaceable at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise, and just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and those fluctuating, successive, indifferent! I will never go into the workshop of any great artist again, nor desire a sight of his picture till it is fairly off the easel; no, not if Raphael were to be alive again, and painting another Galatea.]

*lectiones*, so tempting to the more erudite palates, do but disturb and unsettle my faith. I am no Herculanean raker. The credit of the three witnesses might have slept unimpeached for me. I leave these curiosities to Porson, and to G. D.—whom, by the way, I found busy as a moth over some rotten archive, rummaged out of some seldom-explored press, in a nook at Oriel. With long poring, he is grown almost into a book. He stood as passive as one by the side of the old shelves. I longed to new-coat him in Russia, and assign him his place. He might have mustered for a tall Scapula.

D. is assiduous in his visits to these seats of learning. No inconsiderable portion of his moderate fortune, I apprehend, is consumed in journeys between them and Clifford's Inn—where, like a dove on the asp's nest, he has long taken up his unconscious abode, amid an incongruous assembly of attorneys' clerks, apparitors, promoters, vermin of the law, among whom he sits, "in calm and sinless peace." The fangs of the law pierce him not—the winds of litigation blow over his humble chambers—the hard sheriff's officer moves his hat as he passes—legal nor illegal discourtesy touches him—none thinks of offering violence or injustice to him*—you would as soon "strike an abstract idea."

D. has been engaged, he tells me, through a course of laborious years, in an investigation into all curious matter connected with the two Universities; and has lately lit upon a MS. collection of charters, relative to C——, by which he hopes to settle some disputed points—particularly that long controversy between them as to priority of foundation. The ardour with which he engages in these liberal pursuits, I am afraid, has not met with all the encouragement it deserved, either here, or at C——. Your caputs, and heads of Colleges, care less than anybody else about these questions.—Contented to suck the milky fountains of their Alma Maters, without inquiring into the venerable gentlewomen's years, they rather hold such curiosities to be impertinent—unreverend. They have their good glebe lands *in manu*, and care not much to rake into the title-deeds. I gather at least so much from other sources, for D. is not a man to complain.

D. started like an unbroke heifer, when I interrupted him. *Ā priori* it was not very probable that we should have met in Oriel. But D. would have done the same, had I accosted him on the sudden in his own walks in Clifford's Inn, or in the Temple. In addition to a provoking shortsightedness (the effect of late studies and watchings at the midnight oil) D. is the most absent of men. He made a call the other morning at our friend *M.'s* in Bedford Square; and finding nobody at home, was ushered into the hall, where asking for pen and ink, with great exactitude of purpose he enters me his name in the book—which ordinarily lies about in such places, to record the failures of the untimely or unfortunate visitor—and takes his leave with many ceremonies, and professions of regret. Some two or three hours after, his walking destinies returned him into the same neighbourhood again, and again the quiet image of the fire-side circle at *M.'s*—Mrs. *M.* presiding at it like a Queen Lar, with pretty *A.S.* at her side—striking irresistibly on his fancy, he makes another call (forgetting that they were "certainly not to return from the country before that day week") and disappointed a second time, inquires for pen and paper as before: again the book is brought, and in the line just above that in which he is about

* [Violence or injustice, certainly none, Mr. Elia. But you will acknowledge that the charming unsuspectingness of our friend has sometimes laid him open to attacks, which, though savouring (we hope) more of waggery than of malice—such is our unfeigned respect for G. D.—might, we think, much better have been omitted. Such was that silly joke of L——, who, at the time the question of the Scotch novels was first agitated, gravely assured our friend—who as gravely went about repeating it in all companies—that Lord Castlereagh had acknowledged himself to be the author of Waverley!—*Note, not by Elia.*]

to print his second name (his re-script)—his first name (scarce dry) looks out upon him another Sosia, or as if a man should suddenly encounter his own duplicate! The effect may be conceived. D. made many a good resolution against any such lapses in future. I hope he will not keep them too rigorously.

For with G. D.—to be absent from the body, is sometimes (not to speak it profanely) to be present with the Lord. At the very time when, personally encountering thee, he passes on with no recognition—or, being stopped, starts like a thing surprised—at that moment, reader, he is on Mount Tabor—or Parnassus—or co-sphered with Plato—or, with Harrington, framing "immortal commonwealths"—devising some plan of amelioration to thy country, or thy species—peradventure meditating some individual kindness of courtesy, to be done to *thee thyself*, the returning consciousness of which made him to start so guiltily at thy obtruded personal presence.

[D. commenced life after a course of hard study in the house of "pure Emanuel," as usher to a knavish fanatic schoolmaster at——, at a salary of eight pounds per annum, with board and lodging. Of this poor stipend he never received above half in all the laborious years he served this man. He tells a pleasant anecdote, that when poverty, staring out at his ragged knees, has sometimes compelled him, against the modesty of his nature, to hint at arrears, Dr.—— would take no immediate notice, but after supper, when the school was called together to even-song, he would never fail to introduce some instructive homily against riches, and the corruption of the heart occasioned through the desire of them—ending with "Lord, keep thy servants, above all things, from the heinous sin of avarice. Having food and raiment, let us therewithal be content. Give me Hagar's wish"—and the like—which, to the little auditory, sounded like a doctrine full of Christian prudence and simplicity, but to poor D. was a receipt in full for that quarter's demand at least.

And D. has been under-working for himself ever since;—drudging at low rates for unappreciating booksellers,—wasting his fine erudition in silent corrections of the classics, and in those unostentatious but solid services to learning which commonly fall to the lot of laborious scholars, who have not the heart to sell themselves to the best advantage. He has published poems, which do not sell, because their character is unobtrusive, like his own, and because he has been too much absorbed in ancient literature to know what the popular mark in poetry is, even if he could have hit it. And, therefore, his verses are properly, what he terms them, *crotchets;* voluntaries; odes to liberty and spring; effusions; little tributes and offerings, left behind him upon tables and window-seats at parting from friends' houses; and from all the inns of hospitality, where he has been courteously (or but tolerably) received in his pilgrimage. If his muse of kindness halt a little behind the strong lines in fashion in this excitement-loving age, his prose is the best of the sort in the world, and exhibits a faithful transcript of his own healthy, natural mind, and cheerful, innocent tone of conversation.]

D. is delightful anywhere, but he is at the best in such places as these. He cares not much for Bath. He is out of his element at Buxton, at Scarborough, or Harrogate. The Cam and the Isis are to him "better than all the waters of Damascus." On the Muses' hill he is happy, and good, as one of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains; and when he goes about with you to show you the halls and colleges, you think you have with you the Interpreter at the House Beautiful.

# Christ's Hospital Five-and-thirty Years Ago.

(*The London Magazine*, November, 1820.)

[This autobiographical essay, as its opening sentence indicates, was really a continuation of Charles Lamb's "Recollections of Christ's Hospital." "Tobin" was a friend of the Essayist's, of whom little more than the name is now known. Writing to Wordsworth exultantly about the acceptance of *Mr. H.* by the Drury Lane managers, Lamb says: "On the following Sunday, Mr. Tobin comes. The scent of a manager's letter brought him. He would have gone farther any day on such a business. I read the letter to him. He deems it authentic and peremptory." Writing nine years afterwards to Southey, Lamb, under date 15th August, 1815, remarks, laconically, "Tobin is dead." Another letter of Lamb's, oddly enough, makes mention of Godwin's tragedy of *Antonio* having come out "in a feigned name as one Tobin's," it having been published just at the turn of the century by G. G. and J. Robinson, of Paternoster Row—the "Advertisement" to it, under date 22nd December, 1800, simply mentioning that it was "the first attempt of a lover of the drama." "Dr. T——e" was the Rev. Arthur William Trollope, who retired from Christ's Hospital in 1827, and died immediately afterwards. "Th——," who is mentioned as co-Grecian with S. (meaning of course Stevens, who had been named just before), was Edward Thornton, who having been third wrangler at Cambridge in 1789, became afterwards, through Mr. Pitt's interest, the Right Honourable Sir Edward Thornton, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Portugal and the Brazils. "C. V. Le G——" was Charles Valentine Le Grice, later on of Treriefe, near Penzance, who died as recently as in 1859, and whose elder brother, Samuel Le Grice, had expired some years before of yellow fever at Jamaica. It was this latter, who, as Charles Lamb said elsewhere, was "like a brother" to him at the dreadful time when the Essayist's mother was destroyed. "Fr——" was Frederick William Franklin, subsequently Master of Hertford. "Marmaduke T——" was Marmaduke Thompson, afterwards given up to the life of a missionary. These, at any rate, among Elia's school companions, despite *innumerabilis annorum series et fugæ temporum*, have been happily identified.]

In Mr. Lamb's "Works," published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,* such as it was, or now appears to him to have been between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in the morning, while we were battening upon our quarter of a penny loaf—our *crug*—moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant—(we had three

* Recollections of Christ's Hospital.

banyan to four meat days in the week)—was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*), with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth—our scanty mutton crags on Fridays—and rather more savoury, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion)—he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the live-long day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing-excursions to the New-River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can—for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes:—How merrily we would sally forth into the fields; and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like young dace in the streams; getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying—while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings—the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them!—How faint and languid, finally, we would return. towards night-fall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless—shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement; or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower—to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and

was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and *waked for the purpose,* in the coldest winter nights—and this not once, but night after night—in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow; and, under the cruelest penalties, forbad the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——, who, I learned, in after-days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks. (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered——at Nevis, I think, or St. Kits,——some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat—happier than Caligula's minion, could he have kept his own counsel—but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables—waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters), and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *ghoul*, and held in equal detestation. ——suffered under the imputation:

——— ——'Twas said,
He ate strange flesh.

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his

table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me)—and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side. None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his school-fellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward, for this happened a little after my time, with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of ——, an honest couple come to decay, —whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds! The governors on this occasion, much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family of ——, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to ——, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory. I had left school then, but I well remember ——. He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad; and a sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away.* This was the punishment for the first offence. As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square, Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket—a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted—with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water—who *might not speak to him;* or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude:—and here he was shut up by himself of *nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.*

* One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture

This was the penalty for the second offence. Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fè*, arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire—all trace of his late "watchet weeds" carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frighted features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante had seized upon him. In this disguisement he was brought into the hall (*L's favourite state-room*) where awaited him the whole number of his school-fellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia;* not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*, to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and the Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master; but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good-will—holding it "like a dancer." It looked in his hands rather like an emblem, than an instrument of authority; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often stayed away whole days from us; and when he came, it made no difference to us—he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to "insolent Greece or

to the spirits was dispensed with. This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain; for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul), methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue.

haughty Rome," that passed current among us—Peter Wilkins—the Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle—the Fortunate Blue Coat Boy—and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operations; making little sun-dials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles;* or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe; or studying the art military over that laudable game "French and English," and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time—mixing the useful with the agreeable—as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian;* but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levée, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded farther than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, "how neat and fresh the twigs looked." While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite, we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry.* His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel pipes.† He would laugh, ay, and heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex*——or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*, or *inspicere in patinas*, of Terence—thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis* enough to move a Roman muscle. He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made

* Cowley.

† In this and every thing B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction. B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation.*

his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer. J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?" Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the school-room, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, sirrah," (his favourite adjuration.) "I have a great mind to whip you,"—then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair—and after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell—"*and I* WILL, *too*." In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor* was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph, and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand—when droll squinting W——, having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned.* This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory*, struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his Literary Life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the Country Spectator doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C— when he heard that his old master was on his deathbed—"Poor J. B—may all his faults be forgiven; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities."

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred. First Grecian of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T——e. What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors! You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate! Co-Grecian with S. was Th——, who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks. Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta), a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the Country Spectator) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe. M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas* (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild, and un-

assuming. Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the Aboriginal Britons, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems; a pale, studious Grecian. Then followed poor S——, ill-fated M——! of these the Muse is silent.

> Finding some of Edward's race
> Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young Mirandula), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy!*—Many were the "wit-combats" (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——, "which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man-of-war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention."

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus* of the school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible "*bl——*," for a gentler greeting —"*bless thy handsome face!*"

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia—the junior Le G——and F——; who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect—ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning—exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp; perishing one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca:—Le G——, sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured; F—— dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——, the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——, mildest of Missionaries—and both my good friends still—close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

# The Two Races of Men.

(*The London Magazine*, December, 1820.)

[Under the guise of "Ralph Bigod," Elia delineated his old friend John Fenwick, sometime editor of *The Albion* newspaper, to which, while under his management, Charles Lamb was a contributor. "Comberbatch" (as also later on in this same essay "C." and "S. T. C.") bore reference to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who, at eighteen, had enlisted in a regiment of dragoons under the odd name of Silas Thompson Comberbatch. "K." was James Kenney, the dramatic writer, chiefly remembered now as the creator of Jeremy Diddler in the well-known farce of *Raising the Wind*.]

THE human species, according to the best theory I can form of it, is composed of two distinct races, *the men who borrow*, and *the men who lend*. To these two original diversities may be reduced all those impertinent classifications of Gothic and Celtic tribes, white men, black men, red men. All the dwellers upon earth, "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites," flock hither, and do naturally fall in with one or other of these primary distinctions. The infinite superiority of the former, which I choose to designate as the *great race*, is discernible in their figure, port, and a certain instinctive sovereignty. The latter are born degraded. "He shall serve his brethren." There is something in the air of one of this cast, lean and suspicious; contrasting with the open, trusting, generous manners of the other.

Observe who have been the greatest borrowers of all ages—Alcibiades—Falstaff—Sir Richard Steele—our late incomparable Brinsley—what a family likeness in all four!

What a careless, even deportment hath your borrower! what rosy gills! what a beautiful reliance on Providence doth he manifest,—taking no more thought than lilies! What contempt for money,—accounting it (yours and mine especially) no better than dross! What a liberal confounding of those pedantic distinctions of *meum* and *tuum!* or rather, what a noble simplification of language (beyond Tooke), resolving these supposed opposites into one clear, intelligible pronoun adjective!—What near approaches doth he make to the primitive *community*,—to the extent of one half of the principle at least!—

He is the true taxer who "calleth all the world up to be taxed;" and the distance is as vast between him and *one of us*, as subsisted betwixt the Augustan Majesty and the poorest obolary Jew that paid it tribute-pittance at Jerusalem!—His exactions, too, have such a cheerful, voluntary air! So far removed from your sour parochial or state-gatherers,—those ink-horn varlets, who carry their want of welcome in their faces! He cometh to you with a smile and troubleth you with no receipt; confining himself to no set season. Every day is his Candlemas, or his Feast of Holy Michael. He applieth the *lene tormentum* of a pleasant look to your purse,—which to that gentle warmth expands her silken leaves, as naturally as the cloak of the traveller, for which sun and wind contended! He is the true Propontic which never ebbeth! The sea which taketh handsomely at each man's hand. In vain the victim, whom he delighteth to honour, struggles with destiny; he is in the net. Lend therefore

cheerfully, O man ordained to lend—that thou lose not in the end, with thy worldly penny, the reversion promised. Combine not preposterously in thine own person the penalties of Lazarus and of Dives!—but, when thou seest the proper authority coming, meet it smilingly, as it were half-way. Come, a handsome sacrifice! See how light *he* makes of it! Strain not courtesies with a noble enemy.

Reflections like the foregoing were forced upon my mind by the death of my old friend, Ralph Bigod, Esq., who departed this life on Wednesday evening; dying, as he had lived, without much trouble. He boasted himself a descendant from mighty ancestors of that name, who heretofore held ducal dignities in this realm. In his actions and sentiments he belied not the stock to which he pretended. Early in life he found himself invested with ample revenues; which with that noble disinterestedness which I have noticed as inherent in men of the *great race*, he took almost immediate measures entirely to dissipate and bring to nothing: for there is something revolting in the idea of a king holding a private purse; and the thoughts of Bigod were all regal. Thus furnished by the very act of disfurnishment; getting rid of the cumbersome luggage of riches, more apt (as one sings)

> To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
> Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise,

he set forth, like some Alexander, upon his great enterprise, "borrowing and to borrow!"

In his periegesis, or triumphant progress throughout this island, it has been calculated that he laid a tithe part of the inhabitants under contribution. I reject this estimate as greatly exaggerated: but having had the honour of accompanying my friend, divers times, in his perambulations about this vast city, I own I was greatly struck at first with the prodigious number of faces we met, who claimed a sort of respectful acquaintance with us. He was one day so obliging as to explain the phenomenon. It seems, these were his tributaries; feeders of his exchequer; gentlemen, his good friends (as he was pleased to express himself), to whom he had occasionally been beholden for a loan. Their multitudes did no way disconcert him. He rather took a pride in numbering them; and, with Comus, seemed pleased to be "stocked with so fair a herd."

With such sources, it was a wonder how he contrived to keep his treasury always empty. He did it by force of an aphorism, which he had often in his mouth, that "money kept longer than three days stinks." So he made use of it while it was fresh. A good part he drank away (for he was an excellent toss-pot), some he gave away, the rest he threw away, literally tossing and hurling it violently from him—as boys do burrs, or as if it had been infectious,—into ponds, or ditches, or deep holes,—inscrutable cavities of the earth:—or he would bury it (where he would never seek it again) by a river's side under some bank, which (he would facetiously observe) paid no interest—but out away from him it must go peremptorily, as Hagar's offspring into the wilderness, while it was sweet. He never missed it. The streams were perennial which fed his fisc. When new supplies became necessary, the first person that had the felicity to fall in with him, friend or stranger, was sure to contribute to the deficiency. For Bigod had an *undeniable* way with him. He had a cheerful, open exterior, a quick jovial eye, a bald forehead, just touched with grey (*cana fides*). He anticipated no excuse, and found none. And, waiving for a while my theory as to the *great race*, I would put it to the most untheorizing reader, who may at times have disposable coin in his pocket, whether it is not more repugnant to the kindliness of his nature to refuse such a one as I am describing, than to say *no* to a poor petitionary rogue (your bastard borrower), who, by

his mumping visnomy, tells you, that he expects nothing better; and therefore, whose preconceived notions and expectations you do in reality so much less shock in the refusal.

When I think of this man; his fiery glow of heart; his swell of feeling; how magnificent, how *ideal* he was; how great at the midnight hour; and when I compare with him the companions with whom I have associated since, I grudge the saving of a few idle ducats, and think that I am fallen into the society of *lenders*, and *little men*.

To one like Elia, whose treasures are rather cased in leather covers than closed in iron coffers, there is a class of alienators more formidable than that which I have touched upon; I mean your *borrowers of books*—those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes. There is Comberbatch, matchless in his depredations!

That foul gap in the bottom shelf facing you, like a great eye-tooth knocked out—(you are now with me in my little back study in Bloomsbury, reader!)——with the huge Switzer-like tomes on each side (like the Guildhall giants, in their reformed posture, guardant of nothing) once held the tallest of my folios, *Opera Bonaventuræ*, choice and massy divinity, to which its two supporters (school divinity also, but of a lesser calibre,—Bellarmine, and Holy Thomas) showed but as dwarfs, itself an Ascapart!—*that* Comberbatch abstracted upon the faith of a theory he holds, which is more easy, I confess, for me to suffer by than to refute, namely, that "the title to property in a book" (my Bonaventure, for instance) "is in exact ratio to the claimant's powers of understanding and appreciating the same." Should he go on acting upon this theory, which of our shelves is safe?

The slight vacuum in the left-hand case—two shelves from the ceiling—scarcely distinguishable but by the quick eye of a loser——was whilom the commodious resting-place of Brown on Urn Burial. C. will hardly allege that he knows more about that treatise than I do, who introduced it to him, and was indeed the first (of the moderns) to discover its beauties—but so have I known a foolish lover to praise his mistress in the presence of a rival more qualified to carry her off than himself.—Just below, Dodsley's dramas want their fourth volume, where Vittoria Corombona is! The remainder nine are as distasteful as Priam's refuse sons, where the fates *borrowed* Hector. Here stood the Anatomy of Melancholy, in sober state.—There loitered the Complete Angler; quiet as in life, by some stream side.—In yonder nook, John Buncle, a widower-volume, with "eyes closed," mourns his ravished mate.

One justice I must do my friend, that if he sometimes, like the sea, sweeps away a treasure, at another time, sea-like, he throws up as rich an equivalent to match it. I have a small under-collection of this nature (my friend's gatherings in his various calls), picked up, he has forgotten at what odd places, and deposited with as little memory as mine. I take in these orphans, the twice-deserted. These proselytes of the gate are welcome as the true Hebrews. There they stand in conjunction; natives, and naturalized. The latter seem as little disposed to inquire out their true lineage as I am.—I charge no warehouse-room for these deodands, nor shall ever put myself to the ungentlemanly trouble of advertising a sale of them to pay expenses.

To lose a volume to C. carries some sense and meaning in it. You are sure that he will make one hearty meal on your viands, if he can give no account of the platter after it. But what moved thee, wayward, spiteful K., to be so importunate to carry off with thee, in spite of tears and adjurations to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle?—knowing at the time, and knowing that I knew also, thou most assuredly wouldst never turn over one leaf of the illustrious folio:—what but the mere spirit of contradiction, and childish love of getting the better of thy friend?—Then, worst cut of all! to transport it with thee to the Gallican land—

> Unworthy land to harbour such a sweetness,
> A virtue in which all ennobling thoughts dwelt,
> Pure thoughts, kind thoughts, high thoughts, her sex's wonder!

——hadst thou not thy play-books, and books of jests and fancies, about thee, to keep thee merry, even as thou keepest all companies with thy quips and mirthful tales?—Child of the Green-room, it was unkindly done of thee. Thy wife, too, that part-French, better part Englishwoman!—that *she* could fix upon no other treatise to bear away, in kindly token of remembering us, than the works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brook—of which no Frenchman, nor woman of France, Italy, or England, was ever by nature constituted to comprehend a tittle! *Was there not Zimmerman on Solitude?*

Reader, if haply thou art blessed with a moderate collection, be shy of showing it; or if thy heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S. T. C.—he will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations, tripling their value. I have had experience. Many are these precious MSS. of his—(in *matter* oftentimes, and almost in *quantity* not unfrequently, vying with the originals)—in no very clerkly hand—legible in my Daniel; in old Burton; in Sir Thomas Browne; and those abstruser cogitations of the Greville, now, alas! wandering in Pagan lands.——I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library, against S. T. C.

# New Year's Eve.

(*The London Magazine*, January, 1821.)

EVERY man hath two birthdays: two days, at least, in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his mortal duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth *his*. In the gradual desuetude of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper birthday hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand any thing in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a New Year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam.

Of all sound of all bells—(bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a gathering-up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected—in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal colour; nor was it a poetical flight in a contemporary, when he exclaimed

> I saw the skirts of the departing Year.

It is no more than what in sober sadness every one of us seems to be conscious of, in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with

me, last night; though some of my companions affected rather to manifest an exhilaration at the birth of the coming year, than any very tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. But I am none of those who—

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties; new books, new faces, new years,—from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope; and am sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years. I plunge into foregone visions and conclusions. I encounter pell-mell with past disappointments. I am armour-proof against old discouragements. I forgive, or overcome in fancy, old adversaries. I play over again *for love*, as the gamesters phrase it, games, for which I once paid so dear. I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks, it is better that I should have pined away seven of my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes, of Alice W——n, than that so passionate a love-adventure should be lost. It was better that our family should have missed that legacy, which old Dorrell cheated us of, than that I should have at this moment two thousand pounds *in banco*, and be without the idea of that specious old rogue.

In a degree beneath manhood, it is my infirmity to look back upon those early days. Do I advance a paradox, when I say that, skipping over the intervention of forty years, a man may have leave to love *himself*, without the imputation of self-love?

If I know aught of myself, no one whose mind is introspective—and mine is painfully so—can have a less respect for his present identity, than I have for the man Elia. I know him to be light, and vain, and humoursome; a notorious . . . . . .; addicted to . . . . . .; averse from counsel, neither taking it, nor offering it;— . . . . . . besides; a stammering buffoon; what you will; lay it on, and spare not; I subscribe to it all, and much more, than thou canst be willing to lay at his door——but for the child Elia—that "other me," there, in the background—I must take leave to cherish the remembrance of that young master—with as little reference, I protest, to this stupid changeling of five-and-forty, as if it had been a child of some other house, and not of my parents. I can cry over its patient small-pox at five, and rougher medicaments. I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ's, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that unknown had watched its sleep. I know how it shrank from any the least colour of falsehood.—God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed! Thou art sophisticated.—I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was—how religious, how imaginative, how hopeful! From what have I not fallen, if the child I remember was indeed myself,—and not some dissembling guardian, presenting a false identity, to give the rule to my unpractised steps, and regulate the tone of my moral being!

That I am fond of indulging, beyond a hope of sympathy, in such retrospection, may be the symptom of some sickly idiosyncrasy. Or is it owing to another cause; simply, that being without wife or family, I have not learned to project myself enough out of myself; and having no offspring of my own to dally with, I turn back upon memory, and adopt my own early idea, as my heir and favourite? If these speculations seem fantastical to thee, reader—(a busy man, perchance), if I tread out of the way of thy sympathy, and am singularly conceited only, I retire, impenetrable to ridicule, under the phantom cloud of Elia.

The elders, with whom I was brought up, were of a character not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution; and the ringing out of

the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony.—In those days the sound of those midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around me, never failed to bring a train of pensive imagery into my fancy. Yet I then scarce conceived what it meant, or thought of it as a reckoning that concerned me. Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of life; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December. But now, shall I confess a truth? —I feel these audits but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like miser's farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away "like a weaver's shuttle." Those metaphors solace me not, nor sweeten the unpalatable draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity; and reluct at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived; I, and my friends: to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by age; or drop, like mellow fruit, as they say, into the grave.—Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes me. My household gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being staggers me.

Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fire-side conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and *irony itself*—do these things go out with life?

Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him?

And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios! must I part with the intense delight of having you (huge armfuls) in my embraces? Must knowledge come to me, if it come at all, by some awkward experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading?

Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here,—the recognizable face—the "sweet assurance of a look"—?

In winter this intolerable disinclination to dying—to give it its mildest name—does more especially haunt and beset me. In a genial August noon, beneath a sweltering sky, death is almost problematic. At those times do such poor snakes as myself enjoy an immortality. Then we expand and burgeon. Then are we as strong again, as valiant again, as wise again, and a great deal taller. The blast that nips and shrinks me, puts me in thoughts of death. All things allied to the insubstantial, wait upon that master feeling; cold, numbness, dreams, perplexity; moonlight itself, with its shadowy and spectral appearances,—that cold ghost of the sun, or Phœbus's sickly sister, like that innutritious one denounced in the Canticles:—I am none of her minions—I hold with the Persian.

Whatsoever thwarts, or puts me out of my way, brings death into my mind. All partial evils, like humours, run into that capital plague-sore.—I have heard some profess an indifference to life. Such hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge: and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber as on a pillow. Some have wooed death — but out upon thee,

I say, thou foul, ugly phantom! I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six-score thousand devils, as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as a universal viper; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of! In no way can I be brought to digest thee, thou thin, melancholy *Privation*, or more frightful and confounding *Positive!*

Those antidotes, prescribed against the fear of thee, are altogether frigid and insulting, like thyself. For what satisfaction hath a man, that he shall "lie down with kings and emperors in death," who in his lifetime never greatly coveted the society of such bedfellows?—or, forsooth, that "so shall the fairest face appear?"—why, to comfort me, must Alice W——n be a goblin? More than all, I conceive disgust at those impertinent and misbecoming familiarities, inscribed upon your ordinary tombstones. Every dead man must take upon himself to be lecturing me with his odious truism, that "such as he now is, I must shortly be." Not so shortly, friend, perhaps as thou imaginest. In the meantime I am alive. I move about. I am worth twenty of thee. Know thy betters! Thy New Years' Days are past. I survive, a jolly candidate for 1821. Another cup of wine—and while that turn-coat bell, that just now mournfully chanted the obsequies of 1820 departed, with changed notes lustily rings in a successor, let us attune to its peal the song made on a like occasion, by hearty, cheerful Mr. Cotton.

*THE NEW YEAR.*

Hark! the cock crows, and yon bright star
Tells us the day himself's not far;
And see where, breaking from the night,
He gilds the western hills with light.
With him old Janus doth appear,
Peeping into the future year,
With such a look as seems to say,
The prospect is not good that way.
Thus do we rise ill sights to see,
And 'gainst ourselves to prophesy;
When the prophetic fear of things
A more tormenting mischief brings,
More full of soul-tormenting gall,
Than direct mischiefs can befall.
But stay! but stay! methinks my sight,
Better inform'd by clearer light,
Discerns sereneness in that brow,
That all contracted seem'd but now.
His reversed face may show distaste,
And frown upon the ills are past;
But that which this way looks is clear,
And smiles upon the New-born Year.
He looks too from a place so high,
The Year lies open to his eye;
And all the moments open are
To the exact discoverer.
Yet more and more he smiles upon
The happy revolution.
Why should we then suspect or fear
The influences of a year,
So smiles upon us the first morn,
And speaks us good so soon as born
Plague on't! the last was ill enough,
This cannot but make better proof;
Or, at the worst, as we brush'd through
The last, why so we may this too:
And then the next in reason should
Be superexcellently good:

For the worst ills (we daily see)
Have no more perpetuity,
Than the best fortunes that do fall;
Which also bring us wherewithal
Longer their being to support,
Than those do of the other sort:
And who has one good year in three,
And yet repines at destiny,
Appears ungrateful in the case,
And merits not the good he has.
Then let us welcome the New Guest
With lusty brimmers of the best;
Mirth always should Good Fortune meet,
And render e'en disaster sweet:
And though the Princess turn her back,
Let us but line ourselves with sack,
We better shall by far hold out,
Till the next Year she face about.

How say you, reader—do not these verses smack of the rough magnanimity of the old English vein? Do they not fortify like a cordial; enlarging the heart, and productive of sweet blood, and generous spirits, in the concoction? Where be those puling fears of death, just now expressed or affected?—Passed like a cloud—absorbed in the purging sunlight of clear poetry—clean washed away by a wave of genuine Helicon, your only Spa for these hypochondries—And now another cup of the generous! and a merry New Year, and many of them, to you all, my masters!

# Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist.

(*The London Magazine*, February, 1821.)

[While Barry Cornwall regards Sarah Battle as a purely imaginary character, Mr. Percy Fitzgerald with good show of reason thinks otherwise. He conceives a resemblance to be readily discernible between Mrs. Battle and Charles Lamb's maternal grandmother, Mrs. Field. The latter, indeed, is expressly referred to by Elia in his reverie about "Dream Children," where she is spoken of as for many years housekeeper at a great mansion in Norfolk. The locality is afterwards more clearly identified as Gilston in Hertfordshire, in Elia's account of "Blakesmoor, in H——shire," in which paper, besides, the Essayist points out "the room in which old Mrs. Battle died." "Cousin Bridget Elia," meant in reality the Humorist's sister Mary Lamb. In transferring the subjoined essay, soon after its original publication, to his *London Journal*, Leigh Hunt prefixed to it words that ought ever afterwards to stand as its introduction: "Here followeth, gentle reader, the immortal record of Mrs. Battle and her whist; a game which the author, as thou wilt see, wished that he could play for ever; and accordingly, in the deathless pages of his wit, for ever will he play it."]

"A CLEAR fire, a clean hearth,* and the rigour of the game." This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, nex t her devo-

* [This was before the introduction of rugs, reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinder, betwixt your foot and the marble.]

tions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half and half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; * that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing with them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. The took, and gave no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight; cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sat bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards—over a book.

Pope was her favourite author; his Rape of the Lock her favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles; but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of whist abhors;—the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces;—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone;—above all, the overpowering instructions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*,—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist;—all these, she would say, made quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *soldier* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not, like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and

* [As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day, and lose him the next.]

ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel; perpetually changing postures and connections; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath;—but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous. No *flushes*—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up:—that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colours of things.—Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets that never were to be marshalled—never to take the field?—she even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and in my mind, would have stripped it of some appendages, which in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps?—Why two colours, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it?—

"But the eye, my dear madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason—he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualising would have kept out.—You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings—but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards?—the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession—the gay triumph-assuring scarlets—the contrasting deadly-killing sables—the 'hoary majesty of spades'—Pam in all his glory!—

"All these might be dispensed with; and, with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling.—Imagine a dull deal-board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and turneys in!—Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers—(work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol,—or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)—exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money) or chalk and a slate!"—

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated) brought with him from Florence:—this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds, came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say,—disputing

with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce "*go*"—or "*that's a go.*" She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring "*two for his heels.*" There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms—such as pique—repique—the capot—they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus:—Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight; with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play.—Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in traydrille.—But in square games (*she meant whist*) all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species—though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an interested—bystander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glory. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game.—By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game, where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue—and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion!—chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending;—Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number—and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize?—Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit,—his memory, or combination-faculty rather—against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless.—She could not conceive a *game* wanting the sprightly infusion of chance,—the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with in-

sufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly), were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other :—that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards; that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such.——

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it; but with a tooth-ache, or a sprained ankle,—when you are subdued and humble,—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*.—

I grant it is not the highest style of man—I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle—she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize.—

At such times, those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible.—I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her)—(dare I tell thee, how foolish I am?)—I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

## Valentine's Day.

(*The Indicator*, 14th February, 1821.)

[This hitherto untraced essay of Elia, the source of which is now for the first time pointed out, appeared originally in No. 71 of Leigh Hunt's *Indicator*: where it may be found at pp. 150–152 of the second volume, signed, according to Lamb's not infrequent custom, with four asterisks. "E. B." meant Edward Burney, half brother of Miss Burney, afterwards Madame D'Arblay. William Hone in his Every Day Book, under date 14th of February, transcribed the whole paper with this prefix, "Attend we upon Elia. Hark, how triumphantly that noble herald of the College of Kindness proclaims the day!"]

HAIL to thy returning festival, old Bishop Valentine! Great is thy name in

the rubric, thou venerable Arch-flamen of Hymen! Immortal Go-between! who and what manner of person art thou? Art thou but a *name*, typifying the restless principle which impels poor humans to seek perfection in union? or wert thou indeed a mortal prelate, with thy tippet and thy rochet, thy apron on, and decent lawn sleeves? Mysterious personage! like unto thee, assuredly, there is no other mitred father in the calendar; not Jerome, nor Ambrose, nor Cyril; nor the consigner of undipped infants to eternal torments, Austin, whom all mothers hate; nor he who hated all mothers, Origen; nor Bishop Bull, nor Archbishop Parker, nor Whitgift. Thou comest attended with thousands and tens of thousands of little Loves, and the air is

> Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings.

Singing Cupids are thy choristers and thy precentors; and instead of the crozier, the mystical arrow is borne before thee.

In other words, this is the day on which those charming little missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forespent twopenny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what an extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires. In these little visual interpretations, no emblem is so common as the *heart*,—that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears,—the bestuck and bleeding heart; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affectations than an opera hat. What authority we have in history or mythology for placing the head-quarters and metropolis of God Cupid in this anatomical seat rather than in any other, is not very clear; but we have got it, and it will serve as well as any other. Else we might easily imagine, upon some other system which might have prevailed for anything which our pathology knows to the contrary, a lover addressing his mistress, in perfect simplicity of feeling, "Madam, my *liver* and fortune are entirely at your disposal;" or putting a delicate question, "Amanda, have you a *midriff* to bestow?" But custom has settled these things, and awarded the seat of sentiment to the aforesaid triangle, while its less fortunate neighbours wait at animal and anatomical distance.

Not many sounds in life, and I include all urban and all rural sounds, exceed in interest a *knock at the door*. It "gives a very echo to the throne where hope is seated." But its issues seldom answer to this oracle within. It is so seldom that just the person we want to see comes. But of all the clamorous visitations the welcomest in expectation is the sound that ushers in, or seems to usher in, a Valentine. As the raven himself was hoarse that announced the fatal entrance of Duncan, so the knock of the postman on this day is light, airy, confident, and befitting one that bringeth good tidings. It is less mechanical than on other days; you will say, "that is not the post, I am sure." Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymen!—delightful eternal commonplaces, "having been will always be;" which no school-boy nor school-man can write away; having your irreversible throne in the fancy and affections—what are your transports, when the happy maiden, opening with careful finger, careful not to break the emblematic seal, bursts upon the sight of some well-designed allegory, some type, some youthful fancy, not without verses—

> Lovers all,
> A madrigal,

or some such device, not over-abundant in sense—young Love disclaims it,—and not quite silly—something between wind and water, a chorus where the sheep might almost join the shepherd, as they did, or as I apprehend they did, in Arcadia.

All Valentines are not foolish ; and I shall not easily forget thine, my kind friend (if I may have leave to call you so) E. B.—E. B. lived opposite a young maiden, whom he had often seen, unseen, from his parlour window in C—e Street. She was all joyousness and innocence, and just of an age to enjoy receiving a Valentine, and just of a temper to bear the disappointment of missing one with good humour. E. B. is an artist of no common powers ; in the fancy parts of designing, perhaps inferior to none; his name is known at the bottom of many a well-executed vignette in the way of his profession, but no farther; for E. B. is modest, and the world meets nobody half-way. E. B. meditated how he could repay this young maiden for many a favour which she had done him unknown ; for when a kindly face greets us, though but passing by, and never knows us again, nor we it, we should feel it as an obligation; and E. B. did. This good artist set himself at work to please the damsel. It was just before Valentine's day three years since. He wrought, unseen, and unsuspected, a wondrous work. We need not say it was on the finest gilt paper, with borders—full, not of common hearts and heartless allegory, but all the prettiest stories of love from Ovid and older poets than Ovid (for E. B. is a scholar). There was Pyramus and Thisbe, and be sure Dido was not forgot, nor Hero and Leander, and swans more than sang in Cayster, with mottoes and fanciful devices, such as beseemed—a work in short of magic. Iris dipt the woof. This on Valentine's eve he commended to the all-swallowing indiscriminate orifice—(O ignoble trust !)—of the common post; but the humble medium did its duty, and from his watchful stand, the next morning, he saw the cheerful messenger knock, and by-and-by the precious charge delivered. He saw, unseen, the happy girl unfold the Valentine, dance about, clap her hands, as one after one the pretty emblems unfolded themselves. She danced about, not with light love or foolish expectations, for she had no lover: or, if she had, none she knew that could have created those bright images which delighted her. It was more like some fairy present; a God-send, as our familiarly pious ancestors termed a benefit received, where the benefactor was unknown. It would do her no harm. It would do her good for ever after. It is good to love the unknown. I only give this as a specimen of E. B. and his modest way of doing a concealed kindness.

"Good-morrow to my Valentine," sings poor Ophelia; and no better wish, but with better auspices, we wish to all faithful lovers, who are not too wise to despise old legends, but are content to rank themselves humble diocesans of old Bishop Valentine, and his true church.

# A Chapter on Ears.

(*The London Magazine,* March, 1821.)

[The Essayist's "good Catholic friend Nov——," was no other than Vincent Novello, the eminent organist and composer.]

I HAVE no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader,—nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments and (architecturally speaking)

handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me.—I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred or done anything to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance—to feel "quite unabashed," * and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean —*for music.*—To say that this heart never melted at the concourse of sweet sounds, would be a foul self-libel.—"*Water parted from the sea*" never fails to move it strangely. So does "*In infancy.*" But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue in those days) by a gentlewoman—the gentlest, sure, that ever merited the appellation—the sweetest —why should I hesitate to name Mrs. S——, once the blooming Fanny Weatheral of the Temple—who had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was, even in his long coats; and to make him glow, tremble, and blush with a passion, that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment, which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite, for Alice W——n.

I even think that *sentimentally* I am disposed to harmony. But *organically* I am incapable of a tune. I have been practising "*God save the King*" all my life; whistling and humming it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it. Yet hath the loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

I am not without suspicion that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For, thrumming, in my wild way, on my friend A.'s piano, the other morning, while he was engaged in an adjoining parlour,—on his return he was pleased to say, "*he thought it could not be the maid!*" On his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, his suspicions had lighted on *Jenny*. But a grace snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being,—technically perhaps deficient, but higher informed from a principle common to all the fine arts,—had swayed the keys to a mood which Jenny, with all her (less-cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend's penetration, and not with any view of disparaging Jenny.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet have I taken some pains) what a note in music is; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough bass I contrive to guess at, from its being supereminently harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of *that* which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to *say* I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps, by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio* stand in the like relation of obscurity to me; and *Sol, Fa, Mi, Re*, is as conjuring as *Baralipton*.

It is hard to stand alone—in an age like this,—(constituted to the quick and critical perception of all harmonious combinations, I verily believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal stumbled upon the gamut)—to remain as it were singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating, and refining the passions.—Yet rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you,

* [Earless on high stood, unabashed, Defoe.—*Dunciad.*]

that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter's hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness. But those unconnected, unset sounds are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is passive to those single strokes; willingly enduring stripes, while it hath no task to con. To music it cannot be passive. It will strive—mine at least will—spite of its inaptitude, to thrid the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds, which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention! I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest common-life sounds;—and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth's Laughing Audience!) immovable, or affecting some faint emotion,—till (as some have said, that our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself in some cold Theatre in Hades, where some of the *forms* of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the *enjoyment;* or like that—

———Party in a parlour,
All silent, and all DAMNED!

Above all those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension.—Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying, to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up langour by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music.*

I deny not, that in the opening of a concert, I have experienced something vastly lulling and agreeable:—afterwards followeth the languor, and the oppression. Like that disappointing book in Patmos;* or, like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton, doth music make her first insinuating approaches:—"Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightsome and pleasant subject, which shall effect him most, *amabilis insania*, and *mentis gratissimus error.* A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done.—So delightsome these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them—winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humours, until at last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditations and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subject. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*, discontent, cares, and weariness of life,

* [Rev. chap. x. ver. 10.]

surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else: continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth upon them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds; which now, by no means, no labour, no persuasions, they can avoid, they cannot be rid of, they cannot resist."*

Something like this "SCENE-TURNING" I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend *Nov*—— ; who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.†

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim abbey, some five-and-thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension—(whether it be *that*, in which the psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings, or *that other*, which, with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind)—a holy calm pervadeth me.—I am for the time

——————rapt above earth,
And possess joys not promised at my birth.

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive,—impatient to overcome her "earthly" with his "heavenly,"—still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted *German* ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions *Haydn* and *Mozart*, with their attendant tritons *Bach*, *Beethoven*, and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps,—I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wit's end;—clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me—priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me—the genius of *his* religion hath me in her toils—a shadowy triple tiara invests the brow of my friend, late so naked, so ingenious--he is Pope,—and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a she-Pope too,—tri-coroneted like himself!—I am converted, and yet a Protestant;—at once *malleus hereticorum*, and myself grand heresiarch: or three heresies centre in my person: I am Marcion, Ebion, and Cerinthus—Gog and Magog—what not?—till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran beer (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the rationalities of a purer faith; and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and hostess.

[P.S. A writer, whose real name it seems is *Boldero*, but who has been entertaining the town for the last twelve months with some very pleasant lucubrations under the assumed signature of *Leigh Hunt*,‡ in his "Indicator" of the 31st January last has thought fit to insinuate that I, *Elia*, do not write the little sketches which bear my signature in this magazine, but that the true author of them is a Mr. L——b. Observe the critical period at which he has chosen to impute the calumny,—on the very eve of the publication of our last number,—affording no scope for explanation for a full month; during which time I must lie writhing and tossing under the cruel imputation of nonentity. Good Heavens! that a plain man must not be allowed *to be*——

* [Anatomy of Melancholy.]

† [I have been there, and still would go;
'Tis like a little heaven below.—*Dr. Watts.*]

‡ [Clearly a fictitious appellation; for, if we admit the latter of these names to be in a manner English, what is *Leigh?* Christian nomenclature knows no such.]

They call this an age of personality; but surely this spirit of anti-personality (if I may so express it) is something worse.

Take away my moral reputation,—I may live to discredit that calumny; injure my literary fame—I may write that up again; but, when a gentleman is robbed of his identity, where is he?

Other murderers stab but at our existence, a frail and perishing trifle at the best; but here is an assassin who aims at our very essence; who not only forbids us *to be* any longer, but *to have been* at all. Let our ancestors look to it.

Is the parish register nothing? Is the house in Princes Street, Cavendish Square, where we saw the light six-and-forty years ago, nothing? Were our progenitors from stately Genoa, where we flourished four centuries back, before the barbarous name of Boldero * was known to a European mouth, nothing? Was the goodly scion of our name, transplanted into England in the reign of the seventh Henry, nothing? Are the archives of the steelyard, in succeeding reigns (if haply they survive the fury of out envious enemies), showing that we flourished in prime repute, as merchants, down to the period of the Commonwealth, nothing?

> Why, then the world, and all that's in't, is nothing;
> The covering sky is nothing; Bohemia nothing.

I am ashamed that this trifling writer should have power to move me so.]

# All Fools' Day.

(*The London Magazine*, April, 1821.)

[There was appended to this essay, as it originally appeared, the date "1st April, 1821," as if in scrupulous authentication. "Honest R." meant the old bookseller Ramsay of the London Library on Ludgate Hill: while "Granville S." was Granville Sharp.]

THE compliments of the season to my worthy masters, and a merry first of April to us all!

Many happy returns of this day to you—and you—and *you*, sir,—nay, never frown, man, nor put a long face upon the matter. Do not we know one another? what need of ceremony among friends? we have all a touch of *that same*—you understand me—a speck of the motley. Beshrew the man who on such a day as this, the *general festival*, should affect to stand aloof. I am none of those sneakers. I am free of the corporation, and care not who knows it. He that meets me in the forest to-day, shall meet with no wise-acre, I can tell him. *Stultus sum.* Translate me that, and take the meaning of it to yourself for your pains. What, man, we have four quarters of the globe on our side, at the least computation.

Fill us a cup of that sparkling gooseberry—we will drink no wise, melancholy, politic port on this day—and let us troll the catch of Amiens—*duc ad me—duc ad me*—how goes it?

* [It is clearly of transatlantic origin.]

Here shall he see
Gross fools as he.

Now would I give a trifle to know historically and authentically, who was the greatest fool that ever lived. I would certainly give him a bumper. Marry, of the present breed, I think I could without much difficulty name you the party.

Remove your cap a little farther if you please; it hides my bauble. And now each man bestride his hobby, and dust away his bells to what tune he pleases. I will give you for my part,

——— the crazy old church clock,
And the bewilder'd chimes.

Good master Empedocles,* you are welcome. It is long since you went a salamander-gathering down Ætna. Worse than samphire-picking by some odds. 'Tis a mercy your worship did not singe your mustachios.

Ha! Cleombrotus! † and what salads in faith did you light upon at the bottom of the Mediterranean? You were founder, I take it, of the disinterested sect of the Calenturists.

Gebir, my old freemason, and prince of plaisterers at Babel,‡ bring in your trowel, most Ancient Grand! You have claim to a seat here at my right hand, as patron of the stammerers. You left your work, if I remember Herodotus correctly, at eight hundred million toises, or thereabout, above the level of the sea. Bless us, what a long bell you must have pulled to call your top workmen to their luncheon on the low grounds of the Sennaar. Or did you send up your garlick and onions by a rocket? I am a rogue if I am not ashamed to show you our Monument on Fish-Street Hill, after your altitudes. Yet we think it somewhat.

What, the magnanimous Alexander in tears?—cry, baby, put its finger in its eye, it shall have another globe, round as an orange, pretty moppet!

Mister Adams——'odso, I honour your coat—pray do us the favour to read to us that sermon, which you lent to Mistress Slipslop—the twenty and second in your portmanteau there—on Female Incontinence—the same—it will come in most irrelevantly and impertinently seasonable to the time of the day.

Good Master Raymund Lully, you look wise. Pray correct that error.——

Duns, spare your definitions. I must fine you a bumper, or a paradox. We will have nothing said or done syllogistically this day. Remove those logical forms, waiter, that no gentleman break the tender shins of his apprehension stumbling across them.

Master Stephen, you are late.—Ha! Cokes, is it you?—Aguecheek, my dear knight, let me pay my devoir to you.—Master Shallow, your worship's poor servant to command.—Master Silence, I will use few words with you.—Slender, it shall go hard if I edge not you in somewhere.—You six will engross all the poor wit of the company to-day.—I know it, I know it.

Ha! honest R——, my fine old Librarian of Ludgate, time out of mind, art thou here again? Bless thy doublet, it is not over-new, threadbare as thy stories:—what dost thou flitting about the world at this rate?—Thy customers are extinct, defunct, bed-rid, have ceased to read long ago.—Thou goest still among them, seeing if, peradventure, thou canst hawk a volume or two.—Good Granville S——, thy last patron, is flown.

* [——He who, to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Etna flames——]

† [——He who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea——]

‡ [The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Shenaar.—]

King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapt in lead.—

Nevertheless, Noble R——, come in, and take your seat here, between Armado and Quisada; for in true courtesy, in gravity, in fantastic smiling to thyself, in courteous smiling upon others, in the goodly ornature of well-apparelled speech, and the commendation of wise sentences, thou art nothing inferior to those accomplished Dons of Spain. The spirit of chivalry forsake me for ever, when I forget thy singing the song of Macheath, which declares that he might be *happy with either*, situated between those two ancient spinsters—when I forget the inimitable formal love which thou didst make, turning now to the one, and now to the other, with that Malvolian smile as if Cervantes, not Gay, had written it for his hero; and as if thousands of periods must revolve, before the mirror of courtesy could have given his invidious preference between a pair of so goodly-propertied and meritorious-equal damsels.

* * * * * * *

To descend from these altitudes, and not to protract our Fool's Banquet beyond its appropriate day,—for I fear the second of April is not many hours distant—in sober verity I will confess a truth to thee, reader. I love a *Fool*—as naturally, as if I were of kith and kin to him. When a child, with child-like apprehensions, that dived not below the surface of the matter, I read those *Parables*—not guessing at their involved wisdom—I had more yearnings towards that simple architect, that built his house upon the sand, than I entertained for his more cautious neighbour; I grudged at the hard censure pronounced upon the quiet soul that kept his talent; and—prizing their simplicity beyond the more provident, and, to my apprehension, somewhat *unfeminine* wariness, of their competitors—I felt a kindliness, that almost amounted to a *tendre*, for those five thoughtless virgins,—I have never made an acquaintance since, that lasted, or a friendship, that answered, with any that had not some tincture of the absurd in their characters. I venerate an honest obliquity of understanding. The more laughable blunders a man shall commit in your company, the more tests he giveth you, that he will not betray or overreach you. I love the safety, which a palpable hallucination warrants; the security, which a word out of season ratifies. And take my word for this, reader, and say a fool told it you, if you please, that he who hath not a dram of folly in his mixture, hath pounds of much worse matter in his composition. It is observed, that "the foolisher the fowl or fish—woodcocks,—dotterells,—cod's-heads, &c., the finer the flesh thereof," and what are commonly the world's received fools, but such whereof the world is not worthy? and what have been some of the kindliest patterns of our species, but so many darlings of absurdity, minions of the goddess, and her white boys?—Reader, if you wrest my words beyond their fair construction, it is you, and not I, that are the *April Fool*.

# A Quakers' Meeting.

(*The London Magaznie*, April, 1821.)

[The verses quoted at the head of this essay, are takcn from Richard Flecknoe's dramatic pastoral of "Love's Dominion," elsewhere cited by Charles Lamb in his "Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets."]

Still-born Silence! thou that art
Flood-gate of the deeper heart!
Offspring of a heavenly kind!
Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind!
Secrecy's confident, and he
Who makes religion mystery!
Admiration's speaking'st tongue!
Leave, thy desert shades among,
Reverend hermits' hallow'd cells,
Where retired devotion dwells!
With thy enthusiasms come,
Seize our tongues, and strike us dumb!

READER, would'st thou know what true peace and quiet mean; would'st thou find a refuge from the noises and clamours of the multitude; would'st thou enjoy at once solitude and society; would'st thou possess the depth of thy own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; would'st thou be alone, and yet accompanied; solitary, yet not desolate; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance; a unit in aggregate; a simple in composite:—come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

Dost thou love silence as deep as that "before the winds were made?" go not out into the wilderness, descend not into the profundities of the earth; shut not up thy casements; nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faithed self-mistrusting Ulysses,—Retire with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable; but for a multitude, it is great mastery.

What is the stillness of the desert, compared with this place? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes?—here the goddess reigns and revels.—"Boreas, and Cecias, and Argestes loud," do not with their inter-confounding uproars more augment the brawl—nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds—than their opposite (Silence her sacred self) is multiplied and rendered more intense by numbers and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps, that call unto deeps. Negation itself has a positive more and less; and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

There are wounds, which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quakers' Meeting.—Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle, when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of incommunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend

sitting by—say, a wife—he, or she, too (if that be probable), reading another, without interruption, or oral communication?—can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words?—away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade-and-cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmerman, a sympathetic solitude.

To pace alone in the cloisters, or side aisles of some cathedral, time-stricken:

> Or under hanging mountains,
> Or by the fall of fountains;

is but a vulgar luxury, compared with that which those enjoy, who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness "to be felt."—The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit-soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quakers' Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions,

> ——— sands, ignoble things,
> Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings—

but here is something, which throws Antiquity herself into the foreground—SILENCE—eldest of things—language of old Night—primitive Discourser—to which the insolent decays of mouldering grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and, as we may say, unnatural progression.

> How reverend is the view of these hush'd heads
> Looking tranquillity!

Nothing-plotting, nought-caballing, unmischievous synod! convocation without intrigue! parliament without debate! what a lesson dost thou read to council, and to consistory!—if my pen treat of you lightly—as haply it will wander—yet my spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when sitting among you in deepest peace, which some out-welling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowings of the seed by Fox and Dewesbury.—I have witnessed that, which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you—for ye sate betwixt the fires of two persecutions, the out-cast and off-scouring of church and presbytery,—I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle, with the avowed intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remembered Penn before his accusers, and Fox in the bail-dock, where he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and "the Judge and the Jury became as dead men under his feet."

Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's History of the Quakers. It is in folio, and is the abstract of the journals of Fox, and the Primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to make you mistrust, no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dreg of the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a by-word in your mouth),—James Naylor: what dreadful sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons without a murmur; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatized for blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still!—

so different from the practice of your common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize, *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated.

Get the writings of John Woolman by heart; and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies, upon which the dove sate visibly brooding. Others again I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the absence of the fierce controversial workings.—If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretences. Hypocrites they certainly are not, in their preaching. It is seldom indeed that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling female, generally *ancient*, voice is heard—you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds—with a low, buzzing, musical sound, laying out a few words which "she thought might suit the condition of some present," with a quaking diffidence which leaves no possibility of supposing that anything of female vanity was mixed up, where the tones were so full of tenderness, and a restraining modesty.—The men, from what I have observed, speak seldomer.

Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm. It was a man of giant stature, who, as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced "from head to foot equipt in iron mail." His frame was of iron too. But *he* was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit—I dare not say, of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were unutterable—he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw the strong man bowed down, and his knees to fail—his joints all seemed loosening—it was a figure to set off against Paul preaching—the words he uttered were few, and sound—he was evidently resisting his will—keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort, than the world's orators strain for theirs. "He had been a WIT in his youth," he told us, with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away, that I was enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity of the confession—understanding the term in its worldly acceptation—with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levites—the Jocos Risus-que—faster than the Loves fled the face of Dis at Enna.—By *wit*, even in his youth, I will be sworn he understood something far within the limits of an allowable liberty.

More frequently the Meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go away with a sermon, not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius; or as in some den, where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the TONGUE, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness.—O when the spirit is sore fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings, and nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is, to go and seat yourself, for a quiet half-hour, upon some undisputed corner of a bench, among the gentle Quakers!

Their garb and stillness conjoined, present an uniformity, tranquil and herd-like—as in the pasture—"forty feeding like one."—

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and when they come up in bands to their Whitsun-conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.

# The Old and the New Schoolmaster.

(*The London Magazine*, May, 1821.)

[Where Elia speaks below of "a very dear friend" in New South Wales, allusion is made to Barron Field, the "B. F." to whom is addressed the letter included among these essays under the title of "Distant Correspondents." The Essayist's other "friend M." is understood to have been Thomas Manning, sometime Mathematical Tutor at Cambridge.]

My reading has been lamentably desultory and immethodical. Odd, out of the way, old English plays and treatises, have supplied me with most of my notions and ways of feeling. In everything that relates to *science*, I am a whole Encyclopædia behind the rest of the world. I should have scarcely cut a figure among the franklins, or country gentlemen, in King John's days. I know less geography than a schoolboy of six weeks' standing. To me a map of old Ortelius is as authentic as Arrowsmith. I do not know whereabout Africa merges into Asia; whether Ethiopia lie in one or other of those great divisions; nor can form the remotest conjecture of the position of New South Wales, or Van Diemen's Land. Yet do I hold a correspondence with a very dear friend in the first-named of these two Terræ Incognitæ. I have no astronomy. I do not know where to look for the Bear, or Charles's Wain; the place of any star; or the name of any of them at sight. I guess at Venus only by her brightness—and if the sun on some portentous morn were to make his first appearance in the West, I verily believe that, while all the world were gasping in apprehension about me, I alone should stand unterrified, from sheer incuriosity and want of observation. Of history and chronology I possess some vague points, such as one cannot help picking up in the course of miscellaneous study; but I never deliberately sat down to a chronicle, even of my own country. I have most dim apprehensions of the four great monarchies; and sometimes the Assyrian, sometimes the Persian, floats as *first* in my fancy. I make the widest conjectures concerning Egypt, and her shepherd kings. My friend *M.*, with great painstaking, got me to think I understood the first proposition in Euclid, but gave me over in despair at the second. I am entirely unacquainted with the modern languages; and, like a better man than myself, have "small Latin and less Greek." I am a stranger to the shapes and texture of the commonest trees, herbs, flowers—not from the circumstance of my being town-born—for I should have brought the same inobservant spirit into the world with me, had I first seen it "on Devon's leafy shores,"—and am no less at a loss among purely town-objects, tools, engines, mechanic processes. —Not that I affect ignorance—but my head has not many mansions, nor spacious; and I have been obliged to fill it with such cabinet curiosities as it can hold without aching. I sometimes wonder, how I have passed my probation with so little discredit in the world, as I have done, upon so meagre a stock. But the fact is, a man may do very well with a very little knowledge, and scarce be found out, in mixed company; everybody is so much more ready to produce his own, than to call for a display of your acquisitions. But in a *tête-à-tête* there is no shuffling. The truth will out. There is nothing which I dread so much, as the being left alone for a quarter of an hour with

a sensible, well-infosmed man, that does not know me. I lately got into a dilemma of this sort.—

In one of my daily jaunts between Bishopsgate and Shacklewell, the coach stopped to take up a staid-looking gentleman, about the wrong side of thirty, who was giving his parting directions (while the steps were adjusting), in a tone of mild authority, to a tall youth, who seemed to be neither his clerk, his son, nor his servant, but something partaking of all three. The youth was dismissed, and we drove on. As we were the sole passengers, he naturally enough addressed his conversation to me; and we discussed the merits of the fare, the civility and punctuality of the driver; the circumstance of an opposition coach having been lately set up, with the probabilities of its success—to all which I was enabled to return pretty satisfactory answers, having been drilled into this kind of etiquette by some years' daily practice of riding to and fro in the stage aforesaid—when he suddenly alarmed me by a startling question, whether I had seen the show of prize cattle that morning in Smithfield? Now as I had not seen it, and do not greatly care for such sort of exhibitions, I was obliged to return a cold negative. He seemed a little mortified, as well as astonished, at my declaration, as (it appeared) he was just come fresh from the sight, and doubtless had hoped to compare notes on the subject. However he assured me that I had lost a fine treat, as it far exceeded the show of last year. We were now approaching Norton Folgate, when the sight of some shop-goods *ticketed* freshened him up into a dissertation upon the cheapness of cottons this spring. I was now a little in heart, as the nature of my morning avocations had brought me into some sort of familiarity with the raw material; and I was surprised to find how eloquent I was becoming on the state of the India market—when, presently, he dashed my incipient vanity to the earth at once, by inquiring whether I had ever made any calculation as to the value of the rental of all the retail shops in London. Had he asked of me, what song the Sirens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, I might, with Sir Thomas Browne, have hazarded a "wide solution." * My companion saw my embarrassment, and, the almshouses beyond Shoreditch just coming in view, with great good-nature and dexterity shifted his conversation to the subject of public charities; which led to the comparative merits of provision for the poor in past and present times, with observations on the old monastic institutions, and charitable orders;—but, finding me rather dimly impressed with some glimmering notions from old poetic associations, than strongly fortified with any speculations reducible to calculation on the subject, he gave the matter up; and, the country beginning to open more and more upon us, as we approached the turnpike at Kingsland (the destined termination of his journey), he put a home thrust upon me, in the most unfortunate position he could have chosen, by advancing some queries relative to the North Pole Expedition. While I was muttering out something about the Panorama of those strange regions (which I had actually seen), by way of parrying the question, the coach stopping relieved me from any further apprehensions. My companion getting out, left me in the comfortable possession of my ignorance; and I heard him, as he went off, putting questions to an outside passenger, who had alighted with him, regarding an epidemic disorder that had been rife about Dalston, and which, my friend assured him, had gone through five or six schools in that neighbourhood. The truth now flashed upon me, that my companion was a schoolmaster; and that the youth, whom he had parted from at our first acquaintance, must have been one of the bigger boys, or the usher.—He was evidently a kind-hearted man, who did not seem so much desirous of provoking discussion by the questions which he put, as of obtaining information at any rate. It did not appear that he took any interest, either, in such kind of inquiries, for their own sake; but that he

* [Urn Burial.]

was in some way bound to seek for knowledge. A greenish-coloured coat, which he had on, forbade me to surmise that he was a clergyman. The adventure gave birth to some reflections on the difference between persons of his profession in past and present times.

Rest to the souls of those fine old Pedagogues; the breed, long since extinct, of the Lilys, and the Linacres: who believing that all learning was contained in the languages which they taught, and despising every other acquirement as superficial and useless, came to their task as to a sport! Passing from infancy to age, they dreamed away all their days as in a grammar-school. Revolving in a perpetual cycle of declensions, conjugations, syntaxes, and prosodies; renewing constantly the occupations which had charmed their studious childhood; rehearsing continually the part of the past; life must have slipped from them at last like one day. They were always in their first garden, reaping harvests of their golden time, among their *Flori* and their *Spici-legia;* in Arcadia still, but kings; the ferule of their sway not much harsher, but of like dignity with that mild sceptre attributed to King Basileus; the Greek and Latin, their stately Pamela and their Philoclea; with the occasional duncery of some untoward Tyro, serving for a refreshing interlude of a Mopsa, or a clown Damætas!

With what a savour doth the Preface to Colet's, or (as it is sometimes called) Paul's Accidence, set forth! "To exhort every man to the learning of grammar, that intendeth to attain the understanding of the tongues, wherein is contained a great treasury of wisdom and knowledge, it would seem but vain and lost labour; for so much as it is known, that nothing can surely be ended, whose beginning is either feeble or faulty; and no building be perfect, whereas the foundation and ground-work is ready to fall, and unable to uphold the burden of the frame." How well doth this stately preamble (comparable to those which Milton commendeth as "having been the usage to prefix to some solemn law, then first promulgated by Solon, or Lycurgus") correspond with and illustrate that pious zeal for conformity, expressed in a succeeding clause, which would fence about grammar-rules with the severity of faith-articles!—"as for the diversity of grammars, it is well profitably taken away by the king's majesties wisdom, who foreseeing the inconvenience, and favourably providing the remedie, caused one kind of grammar by sundry learned men to be diligently drawn, and so to be set out, only everywhere to be taught for the use of learners, and for the hurt in changing of schoolmaisters." What a *gusto* in that which follows: "wherein it is profitable that he [the pupil] can orderly decline his noun, and his verb." *His* noun!

The fine dream is fading away fast; and the least concern of a teacher in the present day is to inculcate grammar-rules.

The modern schoolmaster is expected to know a little of everything, because his pupil is required not to be entirely ignorant of anything. He must be superficially, if I may so say, omniscient. He is to know something of pneumatics; of chemistry; of whatever is curious, or proper to excite the attention of the youthful mind; an insight into mechanics is desirable, with a touch of statistics; the quality of soils, &c.; botany; the constitution of his country, *cum multis aliis.* You may get a notion of some part of his expected duties by consulting the famous Tractrate on Education addressed to Mr. Hartlib.

All these things—these, or the desire of them—he is expected to instil, not by set lessons from professors, which he may charge in the bill, but at school-intervals, as he walks the streets, or saunters through green fields (those natural instructors) with his pupils. The least part of what is expected from him is to be done in school-hours. He must insinuate knowledge at the *mollia tempora fandi.* He must seize every occasion—the season of the year—the time of the day—a passing cloud—a rainbow—a waggon of hay—a regiment of soldiers

going by—to inculcate something useful. He can receive no pleasure from a casual glimpse of nature, but must catch at it as an object of instruction. He must interpret beauty into the picturesque. He cannot relish a beggar-man, or a gipsy, for thinking of the suitable improvement. Nothing comes to him, not spoiled by the sophisticating medium of moral uses. The Universe—that Great Book, as it has been called—is to him indeed, to all intents and purposes, a book, out of which he is doomed to read tedious homilies to distasting schoolboys.—Vacations themselves are none to him, he is only rather worse off than before; for commonly he has some intrusive upper-boy fastened upon him at such times; some cadet of a great family; some neglected lump of nobility, or gentry; that he must drag after him to the play, to the panorama, to Mr. Bartley's Orrery, to the Panopticon, or into the country, to a friend's house, or his favourite watering-place. Wherever he goes, this uneasy shadow attends him. A boy is at his board, and in his path, and in all his movements. He is boy-rid, sick of perpetual boy.

Boys are capital fellows in their own way, among their mates; but they are unwholesome companions for grown people. The restraint is felt no less on the one side, than on the other.—Even a child, that "plaything for an hour," tires *always*. The noises of children, playing their own fancies—as I now hearken to them by fits, sporting on the green before my window, while I am engaged in these grave speculations at my neat suburban retreat at Shacklewell—by distance made more sweet—inexpressibly take from the labour of my task. It is like writing to music. They seem to modulate my periods. They ought at least to do so—for in the voice of that tender age there is a kind of poetry, far unlike the harsh prose-accents of man's conversation.—I should but spoil their sport, and diminish my own sympathy for them, by mingling in their pastime.

I would not be domesticated all my days with a person of very superior capacity to my own—not, if I know myself at all, from any considerations of jealousy, or self-comparison, for the occasional communion with such minds has constituted the fortune and felicity of my life—but the habit of too constant intercourse with spirits above you, instead of raising you, keeps you down. Too frequent doses of original thinking from others, restrain what lesser portion of that faculty you may possess of your own. You get entangled in another man's mind, even as you lose yourself in another man's grounds. You are walking with a tall varlet, whose strides out-pace yours to lassitude. The constant operation of such potent agency would reduce me, I am convinced, to imbecility. You may derive thoughts from others; your way of thinking, the mould in which your thoughts are cast, must be your own. Intellect may be imparted, but not each man's intellectual frame.

As little as I should wish to be always thus dragged upwards, as little (or rather still less) is it desirable to be stunted downwards by your associates. The trumpet does not more stun you by its loudness, than a whisper teases you by its provoking inaudibility.

Why are we never quite at our ease in the presence of a schoolmaster?—because we are conscious that he is not quite at his ease in ours. He is awkward, and out of place, in the society of his equals. He comes like Gulliver from among his little people, and he cannot fit the stature of his understanding to yours. He cannot meet you on the square. He wants a point given him, like an indifferent whist-player. He is so used to teaching, that he wants to be teaching *you*. One of these professors, upon my complaining that these little sketches of mine were anything but methodical, and that I was unable to make them otherwise, kindly offered to instruct me in the method by which young gentlemen in *his* seminary were taught to compose English themes.—The jests of a schoolmaster are coarse, or thin. They do not *tell* out of school. He is under the restraint of a formal and didactive hypocrisy in company, as a clergy-

man is under a moral one. He can no more let his intellect loose in society, than the other can his inclinations.—He is forlorn among his co-evals; his juniors cannot be his friends.

"I take blame to myself," said a sensible man of this profession, writing to a friend respecting a youth who had quitted his school abruptly, "that your nephew was not more attached to me. But persons in my situation are more to be pitied, than can well be imagined. We are surrounded by young, and, consequently, ardently affectionate hearts, but *we* can never hope to share an atom of their affections. The relation of master and scholar forbids this. *How pleasing this must be to you, how I envy your feelings,* my friends will sometimes say to me, when they see young men, whom I have educated, return after some years' absence from school, their eyes shining with pleasure, while they shake hands with their old master, bringing a present of game to me, or a toy to my wife, and thanking me in the warmest terms for my care of their education. A holiday is begged for the boys; the house is a scene of happiness; I, only, am sad at heart.—This fine-spirited and warm-hearted youth, who fancies he repays his master with gratitude for the care of his boyish years—this young man—in the eight long years I watched over him with a parent's anxiety, never could repay me with one look of genuine feeling. He was proud, when I praised; he was submissive, when I reproved him; but he did never *love* me—and what he now mistakes for gratitude and kindness for me, is but a pleasant sensation, which all persons feel at revisiting the scene of their boyish hopes and fears; and the seeing on equal terms the man they were accustomed to look up to with reverence. My wife, too," this interesting correspondent goes on to say, "my once darling Anna, is the wife of a schoolmaster.—When I married her—knowing that the wife of a schoolmaster ought to be a busy notable creature, and fearing that my gentle Anna would ill supply the loss of my dear bustling mother, just then dead, who never sat still, was in every part of the house in a moment, and whom I was obliged sometimes to threaten to fasten down in a chair, to save her from fatiguing herself to death—I expressed my fears, that I was bringing her into a way of life unsuitable to her; and she, who loved me tenderly, promised for my sake to exert herself to perform the duties of her new situation. She promised, and she has kept her word. What wonders will not a woman's love perform?—My house is managed with a propriety and decorum, unknown in other schools; my boys are well-fed, look healthy, and have every proper accommodation; and all this performed with a careful economy, that never descends to meanness. But I have lost my gentle, *helpless* Anna!—When we sit down to enjoy an hour of repose after the fatigue of the day, I am compelled to listen to what have been her useful (and they are really useful) employments through the day, and what she proposes for her to-morrow's task. Her heart and her features are changed by the duties of her situation. To the boys, she never appears other than the *master's wife,* and she looks up to me as the *boys' master;* to whom all show of love and affection would be highly improper, and unbecoming the dignity of her situation and mine. Yet *this* my gratitude forbids me to hint to her. For my sake she submitted to be this altered creature, and can I reproach her for it? [These kind of complaints are not often drawn from me. I am aware that I am a fortunate, I mean a prosperous man." My feelings prevent me from transcribing any further.]—For the communication of this letter, I am indebted to my cousin Bridget.

# My Relations.

(*The London Magazine*, June, 1821.)

[As originally printed, this paper closed with a valedictory signature, thus,—"Till when, Farewell. Elia."—Under the name of "James Elia," the Essayist sketched the character of his elder brother, John Lamb, for many years a clerk in the South-Sea House, to whom also (*vide supra*, p. 40) he addressed one of his Sonnets. "Bridget Elia," as already mentioned in the note prefixed to the essay, "Mrs. Battle's Opinion on Whist," meant the author's sister, Mary Lamb.]

I AM arrived at that point of life, at which a man may account it a blessing, as it is a singularity, if he have either of his parents surviving. I have not that felicity—and sometimes think feelingly of a passage in "Browne's Christian Morals," where he speaks of a man that hath lived sixty or seventy years in the world. "In such a compass of time," he says, "a man may have a close apprehension what it is to be forgotten, when he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarcely the friends of his youth, and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time OBLIVION will look upon himself."

I had an aunt, a dear and good one. She was one whom single blessedness had soured to the world. She often used to say, that I was the only thing in it which she loved; and, when she thought I was quitting it, she grieved over me with mother's tears. A partiality quite so exclusive my reason cannot altogether approve. She was from morning till night poring over good books, and devotional exercises. Her favourite volumes were Thomas à Kempis, in Stanhope's Translation; and a Roman Catholic Prayer Book, with the *matins* and *complines* regularly set down,—terms which I was at that time too young to understand. She persisted in reading them, although admonished daily concerning their Papistical tendency; and went to church every Sabbath, as a good Protestant should do. These were the only books she studied; though, I think, at one period of her life, she told me she had read with great satisfaction the Adventures of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman. Finding the door of the chapel in Essex Street open one day—it was in the infancy of that heresy—she went in, liked the sermon, and the manner of worship, and frequented it at intervals for some time after. She came not for doctrinal points, and never missed them. With some little asperities in her constitution, which I have above hinted at, she was a steadfast friendly being, and a fine *old Christian*. She was a woman of strong sense, and a shrewd mind—extraordinary at a *repartee*; one of the few occasions of her breaking silence—else she did not much value wit. The only secular employment I remember to have seen her engaged in, was, the splitting of French beans, and dropping them into a China basin of fair water. The odour of those tender vegetables to this day comes back upon my sense, redolent of soothing recollections. Certainly it is the most delicate of culinary operations.

Male aunts, as somebody calls them, I had none—to remember. By the uncle's side I may be said to have been born an orphan. Brother, or sister, I never had any—to know them. A sister, I think, that should have been Elizabeth, died in both our infancies. What a comfort, or what a care, may I not have missed in her!—But I have cousins, sprinkled about in Hertfordshire—

besides *two*, with whom I have been all my life in habits of the closest intimacy, and whom I may term cousins *par excellence*. These are James and Bridget Elia. They are older than myself by twelve, and ten, years; and neither of them seems disposed, in matters of advice and guidance, to waive any of the prerogatives which primogeniture confers. May they continue still in the same mind; and when they shall be seventy-five, and seventy-three, years old (I cannot spare them sooner), persist in treating me in my grand climacteric precisely as a stripling, or younger brother!

James is an inexplicable cousin. Nature hath her unities, which not every critic can penetrate; or, if we feel, we cannot explain them. The pen of Yorick, and none since his, could have drawn J. E. entire—those fine Shandian lights and shades, which make up his story. I must limp after in my poor antithetical manner, as the fates have given me grace and talent. J. E. then—to the eye of a common observer at least—seemeth made up of contradictory principles.—The genuine child of impulse, the frigid philosopher of prudence—the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine is invariably at war with his temperament, which is high sanguine. With always some fire-new project in his brain, J. E. is the systematic opponent of innovation, and crier-down of everything that has not stood the test of age and experiment. With a hundred fine notions chasing one another hourly in his fancy, he is startled at the least approach to the romantic in others; and, determined by his own sense in everything, commends *you* to the guidance of common sense on all occasions.—With a touch of the eccentric in all which he does, or says, he is only anxious that *you* should not commit yourself by doing anything absurd or singular. On my once letting slip at table, that I was not fond of a certain popular dish, he begged me at any rate not to *say* so—for the world would think me mad. He disguises a passionate fondness for works of high art (whereof he hath amassed a choice collection), under the pretext of buying only to sell again—that his enthusiasm may give no encouragement to yours. Yet, if it were so, why does that piece of tender pastoral Domenichino hang still by his wall?—is the ball of his sight much more dear to him?—or what picture-dealer can talk like him?

Whereas mankind in general are observed to warp their speculative conclusions to the bent of their individual humours, *his* theories are sure to be in diametrical opposition to his constitution. He is courageous as Charles of Sweden, upon instinct; chary of his person, upon principle, as a travelling Quaker.—He has been preaching up to me, all my life, the doctrine of bowing to the great—the necessity of forms, and manner, to a man's getting on in the world. He himself never aims at either, that I can discover,—and has a spirit, that would stand upright in the presence of the Cham of Tartary. It is pleasant to hear him discourse of patience—extolling it as the truest wisdom—and to see him during the last seven minutes that his dinner is getting ready. Nature never ran up in her haste a more restless piece of workmanship than when she moulded this impetuous cousin—and Art never turned out a more elaborate orator than he can display himself to be, upon his favourite topic of the advantages of quiet, and contentedness in the state, whatever it be, that we are placed in. He is triumphant on this theme, when he has you safe in one of those short stages that ply for the western road, in a very obstructing manner, at the foot of John Murray's street—where you get in when it is empty, and are expected to wait till the vehicle hath completed her just freight—a trying three-quarters of an hour to some people. He wonders at your fidgetiness—"where could we be better than we are, *thus sitting, thus consulting?*"—"prefers, for his part, a state of rest to locomotion,"—with an eye all the while upon the coachman—till at length, waxing out of all patience, at *your want of it*, he breaks out into a pathetic remonstrance at the fellow for detaining us so long over the time which he had professed, and declares

peremptorily, that "the gentleman in the coach is determined to get out if he does not drive on that instant."

Very quick at inventing an argument, or detecting a sophistry, he is incapable of attending *you* in any chain of arguing. Indeed he makes wild work with logic; and seems to jump at most admirable conclusions by some process, not at all akin to it. Consonantly enough to this, he hath been heard to deny, upon certain occasions, that there exists such a faculty at all in man as *reason*; and wondereth how man came first to have a conceit of it—enforcing his negation with all the might of *reasoning* he is master of. He has some speculative notions against laughter, and will maintain that laughing is not natural to *him*—when peradventure the next moment his lungs shall crow like Chanticleer. He says some of the best things in the world—and declareth that wit is his aversion. It was he who said, upon seeing the Eton boys at play in their grounds—*What a pity to think, that these fine ingenuous lads in a few years will all be changed into frivolous Members of Parliament!*

His youth was fiery, glowing, tempestuous—and in age he discovered no symptom of cooling. This is that which I admire in him. I hate people who meet Time half-way. I am for no compromise with that inevitable spoiler. While he lives, J. E. will take his swing.—It does me good, as I walk towards the street of my daily avocation, on some fine May morning, to meet him marching in a quite opposite direction, with a jolly handsome presence, and shining sanguine face, that indicates some purchase in his eye—a Claude—or a Hobbima—for much of his enviable leisure is consumed at Christie's, and Phillips's—or where not, to pick up pictures, and such gauds. On these occasions he mostly stoppeth me, to read a short lecture on the advantage a person like me possesses above himself, in having his time occupied with business which he *must do*—assureth me that he often feels it hang heavy on his hands—wishes he had fewer holidays—and goes off—Westward Ho!—chanting a tune to Pall Mall—perfectly convinced that he has convinced me—while I proceed in my opposite direction tuneless.

It is pleasant again to see this Professor of Indifference doing the honours of his new purchase, when he has fairly housed it. You must view it in every light, till *he* has found the best—placing it at this distance, and at that, but always suiting the focus of your sight to his own. You must spy at it through your fingers, to catch the aërial perspective—though you assure him that to you the landscape shows much more agreeable without that artifice. Woe be to the luckless wight, who does not only not respond to his rapture, but who should drop an unseasonable intimation of preferring one of his anterior bargains to the present!—The last is always his best hit—his "Cynthia of the minute."—Alas! how many a mild Madonna have I known to *come in*—a Raphael!—keep its ascendancy for a few brief moons—then, after certain intermedial degradations, from the front drawing-room to the back gallery, thence to the dark parlour,—adopted in turn by each of the Carracci, under successive lowering ascriptions of filiation, mildly breaking its fall—consigned to the oblivious lumber-room, *go out* at last a Lucca Giordano, or plain Carlo Maratti!—which things when I beheld—musing upon the chances and mutabilities of fate below—hath made me to reflect upon the altered condition of great personages, or that woful queen of Richard the Second—

—— set forth in pomp,
She came adorned hither like sweet May.
Sent back like Hollowmas or shortest day.

With great love for *you*, J. E. hath but a limited sympathy with what you feel or do. He lives in a world of his own, and makes slender guesses at what passes in your mind. He never pierces the marrow of your habits. He will tell an old-established play-goer, that Mr. Such-a-one, of So-and-so (naming

one of the theatres), is a very lively comedian—as a piece of news! He advertized me but the other day of some pleasant green lanes which he had found out for me, *knowing me to be a great walker*, in my own immediate vicinity—who have haunted the identical spot any time these twenty years!—He has not much respect for that class of feelings which goes by the name of sentimental. He applies the definition of real evil to bodily suffering exclusively—and rejecteth all others as imaginary. He is affected by the sight or the bare supposition of a creature in pain, to a degree which I have never witnessed out of womankind. A constitutional acuteness to this class of sufferings, may in part account for this. The animal tribe in particular he taketh under his especial protection. A broken-winded or spur-galled horse is sure to find an advocate in him. An over-loaded ass is his client for ever. He is the apostle to the brute kind—the never-failing friend of those who have none to care for them. The contemplation of a lobster boiled, or eels skinned *alive*, will wring him so, that "all for pity he could die." It will take the savour from his palate, and the rest from his pillow, for days and nights. With the intense feeling of Thomas Clarkson, he wanted only the steadiness of pursuit, and unity of purpose, of that "true yoke fellow with Time," to have affected as much for the *Animal*, as *he* hath done for the *Negro Creation*. But my uncontrollable cousin is but imperfectly formed for purposes which demand co-operation. He cannot wait. His amelioration-plans must be ripened in a day. For this reason he has cut but an equivocal figure in benevolent societies, and combinations for the alleviation of human sufferings. His zeal constantly makes him to outrun, and put out, his coadjutors. He thinks of relieving,—while they think of debating. He was black-balled out of a society for the Relief of * * * because the fervour of his humanity toiled beyond the formal apprehension, and creeping processes, of his associates. I shall always consider this distinction as a patent of nobility of the Elia family!

Do I mention these seeming inconsistencies to smile at, or upbraid, my unique cousin? Marry, heaven, and all good manners, and the understanding that should be between kinsfolk, forbid!—With all the strangeness of this *strangest of the Elias*—I would not have him in one jot or tittle other than he is; neither would I barter or exchange my wild kinsman for the most exact, regular, and everyway consistent kinsman breathing.

In my next, reader, I may perhaps give you some account of my cousin Bridget—if you are not already surfeited with cousins—and take you by the hand, if you are willing to go with us, on an excursion which we made a summer or two since, in search of *more cousins*—

Through the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire.

# Mackery End in Hertfordshire.

(*The London Magazine*, July, 1821.)

[The "B. F." alluded to towards the close of this essay was the Barron Field already mentioned in the note prefixed to the sketch of "The Old and the New Schoolmaster."]

Bridget Elia has been my housekeeper for many a long year. I have obligations to Bridget, extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness; with such

tolerable comfort, upon the whole, that I, for one, find myself in no sort of disposition to go out upon the mountains, with the rash king's offspring, to bewail my celibacy. We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits—yet so, as "with a difference." We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings—as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood, than expressed; and once, upon my dissembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered. We are both great readers in different directions. While I am hanging over (for the thousandth time) some passage in old Burton, or one of his strange contemporaries, she is abstracted in some modern tale, or adventure, whereof our common reading-table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. Narrative teases me. I have little concern in the progress of events. She must have a story,—well, ill, or indifferently told—so there be life stirring in it, and plenty of good or evil accidents. The fluctuations of fortune in fiction—and almost in real life—have ceased to interest, or operate but dully upon me. Out-of-the way humours and opinions—heads with some diverting twist in them—the oddities of authorship please me most. My cousin has a native disrelish of anything that sounds odd or bizarre. Nothing goes down with her that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy. She "holds Nature more clever." I can pardon her blindness to the beautiful obliquities of the Religio Medici; but she must apologize to me for certain disrespectful insinuations, which she has been pleased to throw out latterly, touching the intellectuals of a dear favourite of mine, of the last century but one—the thrice noble, chaste, and virtuous,—but again somewhat fantastical, and original-brained, generous Margaret Newcastle.

It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener perhaps than I could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine, free-thinkers - leaders, and disciples, of novel philosophies and systems; but she neither wrangles with, nor accepts, their opinions. That which was good and venerable to her, when she was a child, retains its authority over her mind still. She never juggles or plays tricks with her understanding.

We are both of us inclined to be a little too positive; and I have observed the result of our disputes to be almost uniformly this—that in matters of fact, dates, and circumstances, it turns out, that I was in the right, and my cousin in the wrong. But where we have differed upon moral points; upon something proper to be done, or let alone; whatever heat of opposition, or steadiness of conviction, I set out with, I am sure always in the long run, to be brought over to her way of thinking.

I must touch upon the foibles of my kinswoman with a gentle hand, for Bridget does not like to be told of her faults. She hath an awkward trick (to say no worse of it) of reading in company: at which times she will answer *yes* or *no* to a question, without fully understanding its purport—which is provoking, and derogatory in the highest degree to the dignity of the putter of the said question. Her presence of mind is equal to the most pressing trials of life, but will sometimes desert her upon trifling occasions. When the purpose requires it, and is a thing of moment, she can speak to it greatly; but in matters which are not stuff of the conscience, she hath been known sometimes to let slip a word less seasonably.

Her education in youth was not much attended to; and she happily missed all that train of female garniture, which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls, they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it; but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst come to the worst) most incomparable old maids.

In a season of distress, she is the truest comforter; but in the teasing accidents, and minor perplexities, which do not call out the *will* to meet them, she sometimes maketh matters worse by an excess of participation. If she does not always divide your trouble, upon the pleasanter occasions of life she is sure always to treble your satisfaction. She is excellent to be at play with, or upon a visit; but best, when she goes a journey with you.

We made an excursion together a few summers since, into Hertfordshire, to beat up the quarters of some of our less-known relations in that fine corn country.

The oldest thing I remember is Mackery End; or Mackarel End, as it is spelt, perhaps more properly, in some old maps of Hertfordshire; a farm-house,—delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathampstead. I can just remember having been there, on a visit to a great-aunt, when I was a child under the care of Bridget; who, as I have said, is older than myself by some ten years. I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division. But that is impossible. The house was at that time in the occupation of a substantial yeoman, who had married my grandmother's sister. His name was Gladman. My grandmother was a Bruton, married to a Field. The Gladmans and the Brutons are still flourishing in that part of the county, but the Fields are almost extinct. More than forty years had elapsed since the visit I speak of; and, for the greater portion of that period, we had lost sight of the other two branches also. Who or what sort of persons inherited Mackery End—kindred or strange folk—we were afraid almost to conjecture, but determined some day to explore.

By somewhat a circuitous route, taking the noble park at Luton in our way from Saint Alban's, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about noon. The sight of the old farm-house, though every trace of it was effaced from my recollection, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though *I* had forgotten it, *we* had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I knew the aspect of a place, which, when present, O how unlike it was to *that*, which I had conjured up so many times instead of it!

Still the air breathed balmily about it; the season was in the "heart of June," and I could say with the poet,

> But thou, that didst appear so fair
> To fond imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of day
> Her delicate creation! *

Bridget's was more a waking bliss than mine, for she easily remembered her old acquaintance again—some altered features, of course, a little grudged at. At first, indeed, she was ready to disbelieve for joy; but the scene soon reconfirmed itself in her affections—and she traversed every outpost of the old mansion, to the wood house, the orchard, the place where the pigeon-house had stood (house and birds were alike flown)—with a breathless impatience of recognition, which was more pardonable perhaps than decorous at the age of fifty odd. But Bridget in some things is behind her years.

The only thing left was to get into the house—and that was a difficulty which to me singly would have been insurmountable: for I am terribly shy in making myself known to strangers and out-of-date kinsfolk. Love, stronger than scruple, winged my cousin in without me; but she soon returned with a creature that might have sat to a sculptor for the image of Welcome. It was

* [Wordsworth, on *Yarrow Visited.*]

the youngest of the Gladmans; who, by marriage with a Bruton, had become mistress of the old mansion. A comely brood are the Brutons. Six of them, females, were noted as the handsomest young women in the county. But this adopted Bruton, in my mind, was better than they all—more comely. She was born too late to have remembered me. She just recollected in early life to have had her cousin Bridget once pointed out to her, climbing a stile. But the name of kindred, and of cousinship, was enough. Those slender ties, that prove slight as gossamer in the rending atmosphere of a metropolis, bind faster, as we found it, in hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire. In five minutes we were as thoroughly acquainted as if we had been born and bred up together; were familiar, even to the calling each other by our Christian names. So Christians should call one another. To have seen Bridget, and her—it was like the meeting of the two scriptural cousins! There was a grace and dignity, an amplitude of form and stature, answering to her mind, in this farmer's wife, which would have shined in a palace—or so we thought it. We were made welcome by husband and wife equally—we, and our friend that was with us.—I had almost forgotten him—but B. F. will not so soon forget that meeting, if peradventure he shall read this on the far-distant shores where the Kangaroo haunts. The fatted calf was made ready, or rather was already so, as if in anticipation of our coming; and, after an appropriate glass of native wine, never let me forget with what honest pride this hospitable cousin made us proceed to Wheathampstead, to introduce us (as some new-found rarity) to her mother and sister Gladmans, who did indeed know something more of us, at a time when she almost knew nothing.—With what corresponding kindness we were received by them also—how Bridget's memory, exalted by the occasion, warmed into a thousand half-obliterated recollections of things and persons, to my utter astonishment, and her own—and to the astoundment of B. F. who sat by, almost the only thing that was not a cousin there,—old effaced images of more than half-forgotten names and circumstances still crowding back upon her, as words written in lemon come out upon exposure to a friendly warmth,—when I forget all this, then may my country cousins forget me; and Bridget no more remember, that in the days of weakling infancy I was her tender charge—as I have been her care in foolish manhood since—in those pretty pastoral walks, long ago, about Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.

# Imperfect Sympathies.

(*The London Magazine*, August, 1821.)

[This paper was originally headed, much less happily because in a roundabout way, "Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and other Imperfect Sympathies." "B——" was John Braham, the famous tenor singer, whom Charles Lamb once humorously described as a combination of the Jew, the Gentleman and the Angel. The anecdote with which this essay closes in regard to the three Quakers in the stage coach, Charles Lamb had related to him by the eminent surgeon Sir Anthony Carlisle, who was himself an eye-witness and earwitness of the incident.]

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy in anything. Those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard; or Dutch.—*Religio Medici.*

THAT the author of the Religio Medici, mounted upon the airy stilts of

abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences; in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animals he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself—earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities,—

> Standing on earth, not wrapt above the sky,

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices—made up of likings and dislikings—the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely-English word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or *fellow*. I cannot *like* all people alike.*

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me—and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them—a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure—and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly.

* [I would be understood as confining myself to the subject of *imperfect sympathies*. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct *antipathy*. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

> ———We by proof find there should be
> 'Twixt man and man such an antipathy,
> That though he can show no just reason why
> For any former wrong or injury,
> Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
> Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
> Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
> Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Heywood's "Hierarchie of Angels," and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the King.

> ——— The cause to which that act compell'd him
> Was, he ne er loved him since he first beheld him.]

They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath—but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries, as they arise, without waiting for their full development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth—if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clock-work. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests anything, but unlades his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence, to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian—you never see the first dawn, the early streaks.—He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousness, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain, or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox—he has no doubts. Is he an infidel—he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him—for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book!"—said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to John Buncle,—"did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book." Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. ——. After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends)—when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions." The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him.—Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth—which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son—when four of them started up at once to inform me, that "that was impossible, because he was dead." An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but

with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.* The tediousness of these people is certainly provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another!—In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your "imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses;" and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him.—Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis.—Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's History compared with *his* Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued Humphrey Clinker?

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln. Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side,—of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must, and ought, to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as candour, liberality, the light of a nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change—for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as are all beauties in the dark. I boldly confess I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If *they* are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it has fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they kick at our cookery? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews christianizing—Christians judaizing—puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative*. B—— would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of——Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea!" The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B—— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they?—but you seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain, and the

* [There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable.—*Hints towards an Essay on Conversation.*]

pursuit of gain, sharpen a man's visage. I never heard of an idiot being born among them.—Some admire the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admire it—but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards some of these faces—or rather masks—that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls—these "images of God cut in ebony." But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them—because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) "to live with them." I am all over sophisticated—with humours, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whim-whams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn) Eve dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption, that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth—the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and concealed upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth—oath-truth, by the nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself, at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed—and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness—if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or

accuser, under trials and racking examinations. "You will never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight," said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. "Thereafter as the answers may be," retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances.—I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straightest non-conformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money, and formerly tendered it—so much for tea—I, in humble imitation, tendering mine—for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible—and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious persons for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sate as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbour, "Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?" and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.

# The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple.

(*The London Magazine*, September, 1821.)

[The Old Benchers described in this essay were with one or two exceptions purely imaginary characters. Samuel Salt was conspicuous among these exceptions, being the Bencher in whose employment Charles Lamb's father lived for so many years as clerk and factotum. Under the romantic title of "Lovel," John Lamb, the elder, was very truthfully portrayed. "R. N." referred to one of the most intimate friends of the Lamb family, Randal Norris, for many years sub-treasurer of the Inner Temple.]

I WAS born, and passed the first seven years of my life in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountain, its river, I had almost said—for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places? these are of my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot.

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templer knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride.

Indeed, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden: that goodly pile

Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,

confronting, with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown-office Row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades! a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astoundment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not beng able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never catched, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep!

Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived!

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure, and silent heart-language of the old dial! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost everywhere vanished? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance, and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun;" and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tombstones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell, who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains and sun-dials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes:

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head.
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine.
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach.

Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass,
Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
Withdraws into its happiness.
The mind, that ocean, where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.
Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide:
There like a bird it sits and sings,
Then whets and claps its silver wings;
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.
How well the skilful gardener drew,
Of flowers and herbs, this dial new!
Where, from above the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run:
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers?*

The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner, fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up, or bricked over. Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the South-Sea House, what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile! Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies, spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent wanton lips, in the square of Lincoln's Inn, when I was no bigger than they were figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The fashion, they tell me, is gone by, and these things are esteemed childish. Why not then gratify children, by letting them stand? Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening images to them at least. Why must everything smack of man, and mannish? Is the world all grown up? Is childhood dead? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments? The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures, that still flitter and chatter about that area, less gothic in appearance? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one half so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams those exploded cherubs uttered?

They have lately gothicized the entrance to the Inner Temple-hall, and the library front, to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse that stood over the former? a stately arms! and who has removed those frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianized the end of the Paper-buildings?—my first hint of allegory! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps which made its pavement awful! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the forepart of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you, when you passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors. The roguish eye of J——ll, ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie a repartee with it. But what insolent familar durst have mated Thomas Coventry?—whose person was a quadrate, his step massy and elephantine, his face square as the lion's, his gait peremptory and path-keeping, indivertible

* From a copy of verses entitled The Garden.

from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the browbeater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came, for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an Elisha bear. His growl was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke, his invitatory notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He took it, not by pinches, but a palmful at once, diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waiscoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tinctured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace.

By his side a milder form was sometimes to be seen; the pensive gentility of Samuel Salt. They were coevals, and had nothing but that and their benchership in common. In politics Salt was a Whig, and Coventry a staunch Tory. Many a sarcastic growl did the latter cast out—for Coventry had a rough spinous humour—at the political confederates of his associate, which rebounded from the gentle bosom of the latter like cannon-balls from wool. You could not ruffle Samuel Salt.

S. had the reputation of being a very clever man, and of excellent discernment in the chamber practice of the law. I suspect his knowledge did not amount to much. When a case of difficult disposition of money, testamentary or otherwise, came before him, he ordinarily handed it over with a few instructions to his man Lovel, who was a quick little fellow, and would despatch it out of hand by the light of natural understanding, of which he had an uncommon share. It was incredible what repute for talents S. enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity. He was a shy man; a child might pose him in a minute —indolent and procrastinating to the last degree. Yet men would give him credit for vast application in spite of himself. He was not to be trusted with himself with impunity. He never dressed for a dinner-party but he forgot his sword—they wore swords then—or some other necessary part of his equipage. Lovel had his eye upon him on all these occasions, and ordinarily gave him his cue. If there was anything which he could speak unseasonably, he was sure to do it.—He was to dine at a relative's of the unfortunate Miss Blandy on the day of her execution; and L., who had a wary foresight of his probable hallucinations, before he set out, schooled him with great anxiety not in any possible manner to allude to her story that day. S. promised faithfully to observe the injunction. He had not been seated in the parlour, where the company was expecting the dinner summons, four minutes, when, a pause in the conversation ensuing, he got up, looked out of the window, and pulling down his ruffles—an ordinary motion with him—observed, "it was a gloomy day," and added, "Miss Blandy must be hanged by this time, I suppose." Instances of this sort was perpetual. Yet S. was thought by some of the greatest men of his time a fit person to be consulted, not alone in matters pertaining to the law, but in the ordinary niceties and embarrassments of conduct—from force of manner entirely. He never laughed. He had the same good fortune among the female world,- was a known toast with the ladies, and one or two are said to have died for love of him—I suppose, because he never trified or talked gallantry with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions. He had a fine face and person, but wanted, methought, the spirit that should have shown them off with advantage to the women. His eye lacked lustre.—Not so, thought Susan P——; who, at the advanced age of sixty, was seen, in the cold evening time, unaccompanied, wetting the pavement of B——d Row, with tears that fell in drops which might be heard, because her friend had died that day—he, whom she had pursued with a hopeless passion for the last forty years—a passion, which years could not extinguish or abate; nor the long resolved, yet gently enforced, puttings off of unrelenting bachelorhood dissuade

from its cherished purpose. Mild Susan P——, thou hast now thy friend in heaven!

Thomas Coventry was a cadet of the noble family of that name. He passed his youth in contracted circumstances, which gave him early those parsimonious habits which in after-life never forsook him; so that, with one windfall or another, about the time I knew him he was master of four or five hundred thousand pounds; nor did he look, or walk, worth a moidore less. He lived in a gloomy house opposite the pump in Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street. J., the counsel, is doing self-imposed penance in it, for what reason I divine not, at this day. C. had an agreeable seat at North Cray, where he seldom spent above a day or two at a time in the summer; but preferred, during the hot months, standing at his window in this damp, close, well-like mansion, to watch, as he said, "the maids drawing water all day long." I suspect he had his within-door reasons for the preference. *Hic currus et arma fuêre.* He might think his treasures more safe. His house had the aspect of a strong box. C. was a close hunks—a hoarder rather than a miser—or, if a miser, none of the mad Elwes breed, who have brought discredit upon a character, which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. One may hate a true miser, but cannot, I suspect, so easily despise him. By taking care of the pence, he is often enabled to part with the pounds, upon a scale that leaves us careless generous fellows halting at an immeasurable distance behind. C. gave away thirty thousand pounds at once in his lifetime to a blind charity. His housekeeping was severely looked after, but he kept the table of a gentleman. He would know who came in and who went out of his house, but his kitchen chimney was never suffered to freeze.

Salt was his opposite in this, as in all—never knew what he was worth in the world; and having but a competency for his rank, which his indolent habits were little calculated to improve, might have suffered severely if he had not had honest people about him. Lovel took care of everything. He was at once his clerk, his good servant, his dresser, his friend, his "flapper," his guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer. He did nothing without consulting Lovel, or failed in anything without expecting and fearing his admonishing. He put himself almost too much in his hands, had they not been the purest in the world. He resigned his title almost to respect as a master, if L. could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was a servant.

I knew this Lovel. He was a man of an incorrigible and losing honesty. A good fellow withal, and "would strike." In the cause of the oppressed he never considered inequalities, or calculated the number of his opponents. He once wrested a sword out of the hand of a man of quality that had drawn upon him; and pommelled him severely with the hilt of it. The swordsman had offered insult to a female—an occasion upon which no odds against him could have prevented the interference of Lovel. He would stand next day bare-headed to the same person, modestly to excuse his interference—for L. never forgot rank, where something better was not concerned. L. was the liveliest little fellow breathing, had a face as gay as Garrick's whom he was said greatly to resemble (I have a portrait of him which confirms it), possessed a fine turn for humorous poetry—next to Swift and Prior—moulded heads in clay or plaster of Paris to admiration, by the dint of natural genius merely; turned cribbage boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection; took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility; made punch better than any man of his degree in England; had the merriest quips and conceits, and was altogether as brimful of rogueries and inventions as you could desire. He was a brother of the angle, moreover, and just such a free, hearty, honest companion as Mr. Izaak Walton would have chosen to go a-fishing with. I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness—"a remnant most forlorn of what he was,"—yet

even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favourite Garrick. He was greatest, he would say, in Bayes—"was upon the stage nearly throughout the whole performance, and as busy as a bee." At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in his smart new livery to see her, and she blessed herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was "her own bairn." And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished that sad second-childhood might have a mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.

With Coventry, and with Salt, in their walks upon the terrace, most commonly Peter Pierson would join, to make up a third. They did not walk linked arm in arm in those days—"as now our stout triumvirs sweep the streets,"—but generally with both hands folded behind them for state, or with one at least behind, the other carrying a cane. P. was a benevolent, but not a prepossessing man. He had that in his face which you could not term unhappiness; it rather implied an incapacity of being happy. His cheeks were colourless, even to whiteness. His look was uninviting, resembling (but without his sourness) that of our great philanthropist. I know that he *did* good acts, but I could never make out what he *was*. Contemporary with these, but subordinate, was Daines Barrington—another oddity—he walked burly and square—in imitation, I think, of Coventry—howbeit he attained not to the dignity of his prototype. Nevertheless, he did pretty well, upon the strength of being a tolerable antiquarian, and having a brother a bishop. When the account of his year's treasurership came to be audited, the following singular charge was unanimously disallowed by the bench: "Item, disbursed Mr. Allen, the gardener, twenty shillings, for stuff to poison the sparrows, by my orders." Next to him was old Barton—a jolly negation, who took upon him the ordering of the bills of fare for the parliament chamber, where the benchers dine—answering to the combination rooms at college—much to the easement of his less epicurean brethren. I know nothing more of him.—Then Read, and Twopenny—Read, good-humoured and personable—Twopenny, good-humoured, but thin, and felicitous in jests upon his own figure. If T. was thin, Wharry was attenuated and fleeting. Many must remember him (for he was rather of later date) and his singular gait, which was performed by three steps and a jump regularly succeeding. The steps were little efforts, like that of a child beginning to walk; the jump comparatively vigorous, as a foot to an inch. Where he learned this figure, or what occasioned it, I could never discover. It was neither graceful in itself, nor seemed to answer the purpose any better than common walking. The extreme tenuity of his frame, I suspect, set him upon it. It was a trial of poising. Twopenny would often rally him upon his leanness, and hail him as Brother Lusty; but W. had no relish of a joke. His features were spiteful. I have heard that he would pinch his cat's ears extremely, when anything had offended him. Jackson—the omniscient Jackson he was called—was of this period. He had the refutation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage, of the cook applying to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down *edge* bone of beef in his bill of commons. He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be—as I have given it—fortifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed the manciple (for the time) learned and happy. Some do spell it yet perversely, *aitch* bone, from a fanciful resemblance between its shape, and that of the aspirate so denominated. I had almost forgotten Mingay with the iron hand—but he was somewhat later. He had lost his right hand

by some accident, and supplied it with a grappling hook, which he wielded with a tolerable adroitness. I detected the substitute, before I was old enough to reason whether it were artificial or not. I remember the astonishment it raised in me. He was a blustering, loud-talking person; and I reconciled the phenomenon to my ideas as an emblem of power—somewhat like the horns in the forehead of Michael Angelo's Moses. Baron Maseres, who walks (or did till very lately) in the costume of the reign of George the Second, closes my imperfect recollections of the old benchers of the Inner Temple.

Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me? Ye inexplicable, half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away the preternatural mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you? Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me—to my childish eyes—the mythology of the Temple? In those days I saw Gods, as "old men covered with a mantle," walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry perish,—extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling,—in the heart of childhood, there will, for ever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition—the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital - from every-day forms educing the unknown and the uncommon. In that little Goshen there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

P.S.—I have done injustice to the soft shade of Samuel Salt. See what it is to trust to imperfect memory, and the erring notices of childhood! Yet I protest I always thought that he had been a bachelor! This gentleman, R. N. informs me, married young, and losing his lady in child-bed, within the first year of their union, fell into a deep melancholy, from the effects of which, probably, he never thoroughly recovered. In what a new light does this place his rejection (O call it by a gentler name!) of mild Susan P——, unravelling into beauty certain peculiarities of this very shy and retiring character!—Henceforth let no one receive the narratives of Elia for true records! They are, in truth, but shadows of fact—verisimilitudes, not verities—or sitting but upon the remote edges and outskirts of history. He is no such honest chronicler as R. N., and would have done better perhaps to have consulted that gentleman, before he sent these incondite reminiscences to press. But the worthy sub-treasurer—who respects his old and his new masters—would but have been puzzled at the indecorous liberties of Elia. The good man wots not, peradventure, of the licence which *Magazines* have arrived at in this plain-speaking age, or hardly dreams of their existence beyond the *Gentleman's*—his farthest monthly excursions in this nature having been long confined to the holy ground of honest *Urban's* obituary. May it be long before his own name shall help to swell those columns of unenvied flattery!—Meantime, O ye New Benchers of the Inner Temple, cherish him kindly, for he is himself the kindliest of human creatures. Should infirmities overtake him—he is yet in green and vigorous senility—make allowances for them, remembering that "ye yourselves are old." So may the Winged Horse, your ancient badge and cognizance, still flourish! so may future Hookers and Seldens illustrate your church and chambers! so may the sparrows, in default of more melodious quiristers, unpoisoned hop about your walks! so may the fresh-coloured and cleanly nursery-maid, who, by leave, airs her playful charge in your stately gardens, drop her prettiest blushing curtsey as ye pass, reductive of juvenescent emotion! so may the younkers of this generation eye you, pacing your stately terrace, with the same superstitious veneration, with which the child Elia gazed on the Old Worthies that solemnized the parade before ye!

# Witches and Other Night-Fears.

(*The London Magazine*, October, 1821.)

[The "dear little T. H." here spoken of was Leigh Hunt's eldest son, "Thornton Hunt, my favourite child," to whom Charles Lamb wrote (*vide supra*, p. 61) his charming poem "To T. L. H., a Child."]

WE are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational, and shrewd to detect an historic anomaly, as ourselves. But when once the invisible world was supposed to be opened, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion—of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd—could they have to guide them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony?—That maidens pined away, wasting inwardly as their waxen images consumed before a fire—that corn was lodged, and cattle lamed—that whirlwinds uptore in diabolic revelry the oaks of the forest—or that spits and kettles only danced a fearful-innocent vagary about some rustic's kitchen when no wind was stirring—were all equally probable where no law of agency was understood. That the prince of the powers of darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of the earth, should lay preposterous siege to the weak fantasy of indigent eld—has neither likelihood nor unlikelihood *à priori* to us, who have no measure to guess at his policy, or standard to estimate what rate those anile souls may fetch in the devil's market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly symbolized by a goat, was it to be wondered at so much, that *he* should come sometimes in that body, and assert his metaphor.—That the intercourse was opened at all between both worlds was perhaps the mistake—but that once assumed, I see no reason for disbelieving one attested story of this nature more than another on the score of absurdity. There is no law to judge of the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticised.

I have sometimes thought that I could not have existed in the days of received witchcraft; that I could not have slept in a village where one of those reputed hags dwelt. Our ancestors were bolder or more obtuse. Amidst the universal belief that these wretches were in league with the author of all evil, holding hell tributary to their muttering, no simple Justice of the Peace seems to have scrupled issuing, or silly Headborough serving, a warrant upon them—as if they should subpœna Satan!—Prospero in his boat, with his books and wand about him, suffers himself to be conveyed away at the mercy of his enemies to an unknown island. He might have raised a storm or two, we think, on the passage. His acquiescence is an exact analogy to the non-resistance of witches to the constituted powers.—What stops the Fiend in Spenser from tearing Guyon to pieces—or who had made it a condition of his prey, that Guyon must take essay of the glorious bait—we have no guess. We do not know the laws of that country.

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-closet, the History of the Bible, by Stack-

house, occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds—one of the ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot—attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. We shall come to that hereafter. Stackhouse is in two huge tomes—and there was a pleasure in removing folios of that magnitude, which, with infinite straining, was as much as I could manage from the situation which they occupied upon an upper shelf. I have not met with the work from that time to this, but I remember it consisted of Old Testament stories, orderly set down, with the *objection* appended to each story, and the *solution* of the objection regularly tacked to that. The *objection* was a summary of whatever difficulties had been opposed to the credibility of the history, by the shrewdness of ancient or modern infidelity, drawn up with an almost complimentary excess of candour. The *solution* was brief, modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. To doubts so put, and so quashed, there seemed to be an end for ever. The dragon lay dead, for the foot of the veriest babe to trample on. But—like as was rather feared than realized from that slain monster in Spenser—from the womb of those crushed errors young dragonets would creep, exceeding the prowess of so tender a Saint George as myself to vanquish. The habit of expecting objections to every passage, set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I became staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long-coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugners. I was not to disbelieve them, but—the next thing to that—I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making a child an infidel, is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man's weakness, but the child's strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling!—I should have lost myself in these mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune, which about this time befell me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric—driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds—the elephant and the camel—that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom returned since in any force to trouble me.—But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse, which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously.—That detestable picture!

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The night-time solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life—so far as memory serves in things so long ago—without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel—(O that old man covered with a mantle!) I owe—not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy—but the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow—a sure bedfellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expression) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the daylight,

once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was.—Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm—the hoping for a familiar voice—when they wake screaming—and find none to soothe them—what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves! The keeping them up till midnight, through candle-light and the unwholesome hours, as they are called,—would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution.—That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams—if dreams they were—for the scene of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears would have come self-pictured in some shape or other—

Headless bear, black man, or ape,

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form.—It is not book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. Dear little T.H., who of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition—who was never allowed to hear of goblin or apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or to read or hear of any distressing story—finds all this world of fear, from which he has been so rigidly excluded *ab extra*, in his own "thick-coming fancies;" and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras—dire stories of Celæno and the Harpies—may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition—but they were there before. They are transcripts, types—the archetypes are in us, and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all?—or

——Names, whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not?

Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such subjects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury?—O, least of all! These terrors are of older standing. They date beyond body—or, without the body, they would have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, defined devils in Dante—tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching demons—are they one half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit unembodied following him—

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on,
And turns no more his head:
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.*

That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual—that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth—that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy—are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable insight into our ante-mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadow-land of pre-existence.

My night fancies have long ceased to be afflictive. I confess an occasional night-mare; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, will come and look at me; but I know them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I fight and grapple

* Coleridge's Ancient Mariner.

with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of architecture and of buildings—cities abroad, which I have never seen, and hardly have hope to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon—their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins, with an inexpressible sense of delight—a map-like distinctness of trace—and a day-light vividness of vision, that was all but being awake.—I have formerly travelled among the Westmoreland fells—my highest Alps,—but they are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, to make out a shape, in any way whatever, of Helvellyn. Methought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, and pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara, and caverns,

> Where Alph, the sacred river, runs,

to solace his night solitudes—when I cannot muster a fiddle. Barry Cornwall has his tritons and his nereids gamboling before him in nocturnal visions, and proclaiming sons born to Neptune—when my stretch of imaginative activity can hardly, in the night season, raise up the ghost of a fish-wife. To set my failures in somewhat a mortifying light—it was after reading the noble Dream of this poet, that my fancy ran strong upon these marine spectra; and the poor plastic power, such as it is, within me set to work, to humour my folly in a sort of dream that very night. Methought I was upon the ocean billows at some sea nuptials, riding and mounted high, with the customary train sounding their conchs before me (I myself, you may be sure, the *leading god*), and jollily we went careering over the main, till just where Ino Leucothea should have greeted me (I think it was Ino) with a white embrace, the billows gradually subsiding, fell from a sea-roughness to a sea-calm, and thence to a river-motion, and that river (as happens in the familiarization of dreams) was no other than the gentle Thames, which landed me, in the wafture of a placid wave or two, alone, safe and inglorious, somewhere at the foot of Lambeth palace.

The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of mine, and a humourist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be,—"Young man, what sort of dreams have you?" I have so much faith in my old friend's theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning upon me, I presently subside into my proper element of prose, remembering those eluding nereids, and that inauspicious inland landing.

# Grace Before Meat.

(*The London Magazine,* November, 1821.)

["C——," whose axiom about apple-dumplings is here so gravely put upon record, was Coleridge. "C. V. L's" (meaning Charles Valentine Le Grice's) graceless witticism about the absence from the dinner table of any clergyman, has been since fathered upon so many other humorists that it is little less than a comfort to have it traced here, beyond dispute, to the right paternity.]

THE custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, when dinners were precarious things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing; when a bellyful was a windfall, and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer's or goat's flesh would naturally be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace. It is not otherwise easy to be understood, why the blessing of food—the act of eating—should have had a particular expression of thanksgiving annexed to it, distinct from that implied and silent gratitude with which we are expected to enter upon the enjoyment of the many other various gifts and good things of existence.

I own that I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out upon a pleasant walk, for a moonlight ramble, for a friendly meeting, or a solved problem. Why have we none for books, those spiritual repasts—a grace before Milton—a grace before Shakspeare—a devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the Faëry Queene?—but, the received ritual having prescribed these forms to the solitary ceremony of manducation, I shall confine my observations to the experience which I have had of the grace, properly so called; commending my new scheme for extension to a niche in the grand philosophical, poetical, and perchance in part heretical, liturgy, now compiling by my friend Homo Humanus, for the use of a certain snug congregation of Utopian Rabelæsian Christians, no matter where assembled.

The form then of the benediction before eating has its beauty at a poor man's table, or at the simple and unprovocative repasts of children. It is here that the grace becomes exceedingly graceful. The indigent man, who hardly knows whether he shall have a meal the next day or not, sits down to his fare with a present sense of the blessing, which can be but feebly acted by the rich, into whose minds the conception of wanting a dinner could never, but by some extreme theory, have entered. The proper end of food—the animal sustenance—is barely contemplated by them. The poor man's bread is his daily bread, literally his bread for the day. Their courses are perennial.

Again, the plainest diet seems the fittest to be preceded by the grace. That which is least stimulative to appetite, leaves the mind most free for foreign considerations. A man may feel thankful, heartily thankful, over a dish of plain mutton with turnips, and have leisure to reflect upon the ordinance and institution of eating; when he shall confess a perturbation of mind, inconsistent with the purposes of the grace, at the presence of venison or turtle. When I have sate (a *rarus hospes*) at rich men's tables, with the savoury soup and messes steaming up the nostrils, and moistening the lips of the guests with desire and a distracted choice, I have felt the introduction of that ceremony to be unseasonable. With the ravenous orgasm upon

you, it seems impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment. It is a confusion of purpose to mutter out praises from a mouth that waters. The heats of epicurism put out the gentle flame of devotion. The incense which rises round is pagan, and the belly-god intercepts it for his own. The very excess of the provision beyond the needs, takes away all sense of proportion between the end and means. The giver is veiled by his gifts. You are startled at the injustice of returning thanks—for what?—for having too much, while so many starve. It is to praise the Gods amiss.

I have observed this awkwardness felt, scarce consciously perhaps, by the good man who says the grace. I have seen it in clergymen and others—a sort of shame—a sense of the co-presence of circumstances which unhallow the blessing. After a devotional tone put on for a few seconds, how rapidly the speaker will fall into his common voice, helping himself or his neighbour, as if to get rid of some uneasy sensation of hypocrisy. Not that the good man was a hypocrite, or was not most conscientious in the discharge of the duty; but he felt in his inmost mind the incompatibility of the scene and the viands before him with the exercise of a calm and rational gratitude.

I hear somebody exclaim,—Would you have Christians sit down at table, like hogs to their troughs, without remembering the Giver?—no—I would have them sit down as Christians, remembering the Giver, and less like hogs. Or if their appetites must run riot, and they must pamper themselves with delicacies for which east and west are ransacked, I would have them postpone their benediction to a fitter season, when appetite is laid; when the still small voice can be heard, and the reason of the grace returns—with temperate diet and restricted dishes. Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving. When Jeshurun waxed fat, we read that he kicked. Virgil knew the harpy-nature better, when he put into the mouth of Celæno anything but a blessing. We may be gratefully sensible of the deliciousness of some kinds of food beyond others, though that is a meaner and inferior gratitude: but the proper object of the grace is sustenance, not relishes; daily bread, not delicacies; the means of life, and not the means of pampering the carcass. With what frame or composure, I wonder, can a city chaplain pronounce his benediction at some great Hall feast, when he knows that his last concluding pious word—and that in all probability, the sacred name which he preaches—is but the signal for so many impatient harpies to commence their foul orgies, with as little sense of true thankfulness (which is temperance) as those Virginian fowl! It is well if the good man himself does not feel his devotions a little clouded, those foggy sensuous steams mingling with and polluting the pure altar sacrifice.

The severest satire upon full tables and surfeits is the banquet which Satan, in the Paradise Regained, provides for a temptation in the wilderness:

> A table richly spread in regal mode,
> With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
> And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
> In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd
> Gris-amber-steam'd; all fish from sea or shore,
> Freshet or purling brook, for which was drain'd
> Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

The tempter, I warrant you, thought these cates would go down without the recommendatory preface of a benediction. They are like to be short graces where the devil plays the host.—I am afraid the poet wants his usual decorum in this place. Was he thinking of the old Roman luxury, or of a gaudy day at Cambridge? This was a temptation fitter for a Heliogabalus. The whole banquet is too civic and culinary, and the accompaniments altogether a profanation of that deep, abstracted, holy scene. The mighty

artillery of sauces, which the cook-fiend conjures up, is out of proportion to the simple wants and plain hunger of the guest. He that disturbed him in his dreams, from his dreams might have been taught better. To the temperate fantasies of the famished Son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves? —He dreamed indeed,

> ——— As appetite is wont to dream,
> Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats?

> Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
> And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
> Food to Elijah bringing even and morn;
> Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
> He saw the prophet also how he fled
> Into the desert, and how there he slept
> Under a juniper; then how awaked
> He found his supper on the coals prepared,
> And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
> And ate the second time after repose,
> The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
> Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook,
> Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the divine Hungerer. To which of these two visionary banquets, think you, would the introduction of what is called the grace have been most fitting and pertinent?

Theoretically I am no enemy to graces; but practically I own that (before meat especially) they seem to involve something awkward and unseasonable. Our appetites, of one or another kind, are excellent spurs to our reason, which might otherwise but feebly set about the great ends of preserving and continuing the species. They are fit blessings to be contemplated at a distance with a becoming gratitude; but the moment of appetite (the judicious reader will apprehend me) is, perhaps, the least fit season for that exercise. The Quakers who go about their business, of every description, with more calmness than we, have more title to the use of these benedictory prefaces. I have always admired their silent grace, and the more because I have observed their applications to the meat and drink following to be less passionate and sensual than ours. They are neither gluttons nor wine-bibbers as a people. They eat, as a horse bolts his chopped hay, with indifference, calmness, and cleanly circumstances. They neither grease nor slop themselves. When I see a citizen in his bib and tucker, I cannot imagine it a surplice.

I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a physiognomical character in the tastes for food. C—— holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings. I am not certain but he is right. With the decay of my first innocence, I confess a less and less relish daily for those innocuous cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost their gust with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous under culinary disappointments, as to come home at the dinner hour, for instance, expecting some savoury mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted—that commonest of kitchen failures—puts me beside my tenour.—The author of the Rambler used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favourite food. Was this the music

quite proper to be preceded by the grace? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing might be contemplated with less perturbation? I quarrel with no man's tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions otherwhere, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish—his Dagon—with a special consecration of no ark but the fat tureen before him. Graces are the sweet preluding strains to the banquets of angels and children; to the roots and severer repasts of the Chartreuse; to the slender, but not slenderly acknowledged, refection of the poor and humble man: but at the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they become of dissonant mood, less timed and tuned to the occasion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs would be, which children hear tales of at Hog's Norton. We sit too long at our meals, or are too curious in the study of them, or too disordered in our application to them, or engross too great a portion of those good things (which should be common) to our share, to be able with any grace to say grace. To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion is to add hypocrisy to injustice. A lurking sense of this truth is what makes the performance of this duty so cold and spiritless a service at most tables. In houses where the grace is as indispensable as the napkin, who has not seen that never settled question arise, as to *who shall say it;* while the good man of the house and the visitor clergyman, or some other guest belike of next authority from years or gravity, shall be bandying about the office between them as a matter of compliment, each of them not unwilling to shift the awkward burthen of an equivocal duty from his own shoulders?

I once drank tea in company with two Methodist divines of different persuasions, whom it was my fortune to introduce to each other for the first time that evening. Before the first cup was handed round, one of these reverend gentlemen put it to the other, with all due solemnity, whether he chose to *say anything*. It seems it is the custom with some sectaries to put up a short prayer before this meal also. His reverend brother did not at first quite apprehend him, but upon an explanation, with little less importance he made answer, that it was not a custom known in his church: in which courteous evasion the other acquiescing for good manners' sake, or in compliance with a weak brother, the supplementary or tea-grace was waived altogether. With what spirit might not Lucian have painted two priests, of *his* religion, playing into each other's hands the compliment of performing or omitting a sacrifice,—the hungry God meantime, doubtful of his incense, with expectant nostrils hovering over the two flamens, and (as between two stools) going away in the end without his supper.

A short form upon these occasions is felt to want reverence; a long one, I am afraid, cannot escape the charge of impertinence. I do not quite approve of the epigrammatic conciseness with which that equivocal wag (but my pleasant school-fellow) C. V. L., when importuned for a grace, used to inquire, first slyly leering down the table, "Is there no clergyman here?"—significantly adding, "thank G—." Nor do I think our old form at school quite pertinent, where we were used to preface our bald bread and cheese suppers with a preamble connecting with that humble blessing a recognition of benefits the most awful and overwhelming to the imagination which religion has to offer. *Non tunc illis erat locus.* I remember we were put to it to reconcile the phrase "good creatures," upon which the blessing rested, with the fare set before us, wilfully understanding that expression in a low and animal sense,—till some one recalled a legend, which told how in the golden days of Christ's, the young Hospitallers were wont to have smoking joints of roast meat upon their nightly

boards, till some pious benefactor, commiserating the decencies, rather than the palates, of the children, commuted our flesh for garments, and gave us—*horresco referens*—trousers instead of mutton.

# My First Play.

(*The London Magazine*, December, 1821.)

[Russell Court was the locality mentioned in the first line of this paper as it originally appeared in the Magazine. It was afterwards altered to Cross Court in 1823, when the Essays were first collected.]

At the north end of Cross Court there yet stands a portal, of some architectural pretensions though reduced to humble use, serving at present for an entrance to a printing-office. This old door-way, if you are young, reader, you may not know was the identical pit entrance to Old Drury—Garrick's Drury—all of it that is left. I never pass it without shaking some forty years from off my shoulders, recurring to the evening when I passed through it to see *my first play*. The afternoon had been wet, and the condition of our going (the elder folks and myself) was, that the rain should cease. With what a beating heart did I watch from the window the puddles, from the stillness of which I was taught to prognosticate the desired cessation! I seem to remember the last spurt, and the glee with which I ran to announce it.

We went with orders, which my godfather F. had sent us. He kept the oil shop (now Davies's) at the corner of Featherstone Buildings, in Holborn. F. was a tall grave person, lofty in speech, and had pretensions above his rank. He associated in those days with John Palmer, the comedian, whose gait and bearing he seemed to copy; if John (which is quite as likely) did not rather borrow somewhat of his manner, from my godfather. He was also known to, and visited by, Sheridan. It was to his house in Holborn that young Brinsley brought his first wife on her elopement with him from a boarding-school at Bath—the beautiful Maria Linley. My parents were present (over a quadrille table) when he arrived in the evening with his harmonious charge.—From either of these connections it may be inferred that my godfather could command an order for the then Drury-lane theatre at pleasure—and, indeed, a pretty liberal issue of those cheap billets, in Brinsley's easy autograph, I have heard him say was the sole remuneration which he had received for many years' nightly illumination of the orchestra and various avenues of that theatre—and he was content it should be so. The honour of Sheridan's familiarity—or supposed familiarity—was better to my godfather than money.

F. was the most gentlemanly of oilmen; grandiloquent, yet courteous. His delivery of the commonest matters of fact was Ciceronian. He had two Latin words almost constantly in his mouth (how odd sounds Latin from an oilman's lips!), which my better knowledge since has enabled me to correct. In strict pronunciation they should have been sounded *vice versâ*—but in those young years they impressed me with more awe than they would now do, read aright from Seneca or Varro—in his own peculiar pronunciation, monosyllabically elaborated, or Anglicized, into something like *verse verse*. By an imposing manner, and the help of these distorted syllables, he climbed (but that was little) to the highest parochial honours which St. Andrew's has to bestow.

He is dead—and thus much I thought due to his memory, both for my first

orders (little wondrous talismans !—slight keys, and insignificant to outward sight, but opening to me more than Arabian paradises !) and moreover, that by his testamentary beneficence I came into possession of the only landed property which I could ever call my own—situate near the road-way village of pleasant Puckeridge, in Hertfordshire. When I journeyed down to take possession, and planted foot on my own ground, the stately habits of the donor descended upon me, and I strode (shall I confess the vanity ?) with larger paces over my allotment of three-quarters of an acre, with its commodious mansion in the midst, with the feeling of an English freeholder that all betwixt sky and centre was my own. The estate has passed into more prudent hands, and nothing but an agrarian can restore it.

In those days were pit orders. Beshrew the uncomfortable manager who abolished them !—with one of these we went. I remember the waiting at the door—not that which is left—but between that and an inner door in shelter —O when shall I be such an expectant again !—with the cry of nonpareils, an indispensable play-house accompaniment in those days. As near as I can recollect, the fashionable pronunciation of the theatrical fruiteresses then was, "Chase some oranges, chase some numparels, chase a bill of the play ;"—chase *pro* choose. But when we got in, and I beheld the green curtain that veiled a heaven to my imagination, which was soon to be disclosed——the breathless anticipations I endured ! I had seen something like it in the plate prefixed to Troilus and Cressida, in Rowe's Shakspeare—the tent scene with Diomede—and a sight of that plate can always bring back in a measure the feeling of that evening —The boxes at that time, full of well-dressed women of quality, projected over the pit ; and the pilasters reaching down were adorned with a glistening substance (I know not what) under glass (as it seemed), resembling—a homely fancy—but I judged it to be sugar-candy—yet, to my raised imagination, divested of its homelier qualities, it appeared a glorified candy !—The orchestra lights at length arose, those "fair Auroras !" Once the bell sounded. It was to ring out yet once again—and, incapable of the anticipation, I reposed my shut eyes in a sort of resignation upon the maternal lap. It rang the second time. The curtain drew up—I was not past six years old—and the play was Artaxerxes !

I had dabbled a little in the Universal History—the ancient part of it—and here was the court of Persia. It was being admitted to a sight of the past. I took no proper interest in the action going on, for I understood not its import—but I heard the word Darius, and I was in the midst of Daniel. All feeling was absorbed in vision. Gorgeous vests, gardens, palaces, princesses, passed before me. I knew not players. I was in Persepolis for the time; and the burning idol of their devotion almost converted me into a worshipper. I was awestruck, and believed those significations to be something more than elemental fires. It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams.—Harlequin's Invasion followed ; where, I remember, the transformation of the magistrates into reverend beldams seemed to me a piece of grave historic justice, and the tailor carrying his own head to be as sober a verity as the legend of St. Denys.

The next play to which I was taken was the Lady of the Manor, of which, with the exception of some scenery, very faint traces are left in my memory. It was followed by a pantomime, called Lun's Ghost a satiric touch, I apprehend, upon Rich, not long since dead - but to my apprehension (too sincere for satire), Lun was as remote a piece of antiquity as Lud - the father of a line of Harlequins—transmitting his dagger of lath (the wooden sceptre) through countless ages. I saw the primeval Motley come from his silent tomb in a ghastly vest of white patch-work, like the apparition of a dead rainbow. So Harlequins (thought I) look when they are dead.

My third play followed in quick succession. It was the Way of the World.

I think I must have sat at it as grave as a judge: for, I remember, the hysteric affectations of good Lady Wishfort affected me like some solemn tragic passion. Robinson Crusoe followed; in which Crusoe, man Friday, and the parrot, were as good and authentic as in the story.—The clownery and pantaloonery of these pantomimes have clean passed out of my head. I believe, I no more laughed at them, than at the same age I should have been disposed to laugh at the grotesque Gothic heads (seeming to me then replete with devout meaning) that gape, and grin, in stone around the inside of the old Round Church (my church) of the Templars.

I saw these plays in the season 1781–2, when I was from six to seven years old. After the intervention of six or seven other years (for at school all play-going was inhibited) I again entered the doors of a theatre. That old Artaxerxes evening had never done ringing in my fancy. I expected the same feelings to come again with the same occasion. But we differ from ourselves less at sixty and sixteen, than the latter does from six. In that interval what had I not lost! At the first period I knew nothing, understood nothing, discriminated nothing. I felt all, loved all, wondered all—

Was nourished, I could not tell how—

I had left the temple a devotee, and was returned a rationalist. The same things were there materially; but the emblem, the reference, was gone!—The green curtain was no longer a veil, drawn between two worlds, the unfolding of which was to bring back past ages, to present "a royal ghost,"—but a certain quantity of green baize, which was to separate the audience for a given time from certain of their fellow-men who were to come forward and pretend those parts. The lights—the orchestra lights—came up a clumsy machinery. The first ring, and the second ring, was now but a trick of the prompter's bell—which had been, like the note of the cuckoo, a phantom of a voice, no hand seen or guessed at which ministered to its warning. The actors were men and women painted. I thought the fault was in them; but it was in myself, and the alteration which those many centuries—of six short twelvemonths—had wrought in me.—Perhaps it was fortunate for me that the play of the evening was but an indifferent comedy, as it gave me time to crop some unreasonable expectations, which might have interfered with the genuine emotions with which I was soon after enabled to enter upon the first appearance to me of Mrs. Siddons in Isabella. Comparison and retrospection soon yielded to the present attraction of the scene; and the theatre became to me, upon a new stock, the most delightful of recreations.

## Dream-Children: a Reverie.

(*The London Magazine*, January, 1822.)

[The "great house" described in this Essay is not really situated, as here stated (probably as a blind), in Norfolk, but as correctly announced afterwards—in the essay upon "Blakesmoor" (meaning Gilston)—in Hertfordshire. "J. L——" was John Lamb, the essayist's brother. "Alice W——n" was first identified by Mr. Carew Hazlitt in the April number of *Macmillan's Magazine* for 1867, and afterwards, more distinctly, in his book of "waifs and strays," published in 1874 under the title of "Charles and Mary Lamb," as Alice Winn, Charles's first love, who eventually married Mr. Bartrum, the wealthy pawnbroker of Princes Street, Leicester Square, one of whose daughters became the wife of William Coulson, the eminent surgeon.]

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children: to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or

grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by its owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish, indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was: and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm;" and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eye-brows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I could never be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for

nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after-life, he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowance enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of representment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech; "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages, before we have existence, and a name"——and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

# On Some of the Old Actors.

(*The London Magazine*, February, 1822.)

[Under the simple but comprehensive title of "The Old Actors," three papers, or instalments of one paper, were originally published by Elia in the *London*. These were afterwards differently portioned out and considerably modified under three distinct headings, when the Elian Essays were first collected. Besides the one given below, there was another "On the Artificial Comedy of the last Century," and another yet, "On the Acting of Munden." This last-mentioned essay was merely the concluding portion of the third paper as originally published in the Magazine. A fragment of it, in 1823, was incorporated by Charles Lamb, with the essay here subjoined. Other fragmentary portions then omitted are now interpolated, being distinguished from the context, like the rest of the restored passages, by being bracketed.]

THE casual sight of an old Play Bill, which I picked up the other day—I know not by what chance it was preserved so long—tempts me to call to mind a few of the Players, who make the principal figure in it. It presents the cast of parts in the Twelfth Night at the old Drury Lane Theatre two-and-thirty years ago. There is something very touching in these old remembrances. They make us think how we *once* used to read a Play Bill—not, as now peradventure, singling out a favourite performer, and casting a negligent eye over the rest; but spelling out every name, down to the very mutes and servants of the scene;—when it was a matter of no small moment to us whether Whitfield, or Packer, took the part of Fabian; when Benson and Burton and Phillimore—names of small account—had an importance beyond what we can be content to attribute now to the time's best actors.—"Orsino, by Mr. Barrymore."—What a full Shakspearean sound it carries! how fresh to memory arise the image, and the manner, of the gentle actor!

Those who have only seen Mrs. Jordan within the last ten or fifteen years, can have no adequate notion of her performance of such parts as Ophelia; Helena, in All's Well that Ends Well; and Viola in this play. Her voice had latterly acquired a coarseness, which suited well enough with her Nells and Hoydens, but in those days it sank, with her steady melting eye, into the heart. Her joyous parts—in which her memory now chiefly lives—in her youth were outdone by her plaintive ones. There is no giving an account how she delivered the disguised story of her love for Orsino. It was no set speech, that she had foreseen, so as to weave it into an harmonious period, line necessarily following line, to make up the music—yet I have heard it so spoken, or rather *read*, not without its grace and beauty—but, when she had declared her sister's history to be a "blank," and that she "never told her love," there was a pause, as if the story had ended - and then the image of the "worm in the bud" came up as a new suggestion—and the heightened image of "Patience" still followed after that, as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. So in those fine lines—

> Write loyal cantos of contemned love—
> Hollow your name to the reverberate hills—

there was no preparation made in the foregoing image for that which was to follow. She used no rhetoric in her passion; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law.

Mrs. Powel (now Mrs. Renard), then in the pride of her beauty, made an admirable Olivia. She was particularly excellent in her unbending scenes in conversation with the Clown. I have seen some Olivias—and those very sensible actresses too—who in these interlocutions have seemed to set their wits at the jester, and to vie conceits with him in downright emulation. But she used him for her sport, like what he was, to trifle a leisure sentence or two with, and then to be dismissed, and she to be the Great Lady still. She touched the imperious fantastic humour of the character with nicety. Her fine spacious person filled the scene.

The part of Malvolio has in my judgment been so often misunderstood, and the *general merits* of the actor, who then played it, so unduly appreciated, that I shall hope for pardon, if I am a little prolix upon these points.

Of all the actors who flourished in my time—a melancholy phrase if taken aright, reader—Bensley had most of the swell of soul, was greatest in the delivery of heroic conceptions, the emotions consequent upon the presentiment of a great idea to the fancy. He had the true poetical enthusiasm—the rarest faculty among players. None that I remember possessed even a portion of that fine madness which he threw out in Hotspur's famous rant about glory, or the transports of the Venetian incendiary at the vision of the fired city.* His voice had the dissonance, and at times the inspiriting effect of the trumpet. His gait was uncouth and stiff, but no way embarrassed by affectation; and the thorough-bred gentleman was uppermost in every movement. He seized the moment of passion with the greatest truth; like a faithful clock, never striking before the time; never anticipating or leading you to anticipate. He was totally destitute of trick and artifice. He seemed come upon the stage to do the poet's message simply, and he did it with as genuine fidelity as the nuncios in Homer deliver the errands of the gods. He let the passion or the sentiment do its own work without prop or bolstering. He would have scorned to mountebank it; and betrayed none of that *cleverness* which is the bane of serious acting. For this reason, his Iago was the only endurable one which I remember to have seen. No spectator from his action could divine more of his artifice than Othello was supposed to do. His confessions in soliloquy alone put you in possession of the mystery. There were no by-intimations to make the audience fancy their own discernment so much greater than that of the Moor—who commonly stands like a great helpless mark set up for mine Ancient, and a quantity of barren spectators, to shoot their bolts at. The Iago of Bensley did not go to work so grossly. There was a triumphant tone about the character, natural to a general consciousness of power; but none of that petty vanity which chuckles and cannot contain itself upon any little successful stroke of its knavery—as is common with your small villains, and green probationers in mischief. It did not clap or crow before its time. It was not a a man setting his wits at a child, and winking all the while at other children who are mightily pleased at being let into the secret; but a consummate villain entrapping a noble nature into toils, against which no discernment was available, where the manner was as fathomless as the purpose seemed dark, and without motive. The part of Malvolio, in the Twelfth Night, was performed by Bensley, with a richness and a dignity, of which (to judge from some recent castings of that character) the very tradition must be worn out from the stage. No manager in those days would have dreamed of giving it to Mr. Baddeley, or Mr. Parsons: when Bensley was occasionally absent from the theatre, John Kemble thought it no derogation to succeed to the part. Malvolio is not essentially ludicrous. He becomes comic but by accident. He is cold,

* [How lovely the Adriatic whore
Dress'd in her flames will shine—devouring flames—
Such as will burn her to her wat'ry bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.—*Pierre, in Venice Preserved.*]

austere, repelling; but dignified, consistent, and, for what appears, rather of an over-stretched morality. Maria describes him as a sort of Puritan; and he might have worn his gold chain with honour in one of our old round-head families, in the service of a Lambert, or a Lady Fairfax. But his morality and his manners are misplaced in Illyria. He is opposed to the proper *levities* of the piece, and falls in the unequal contest. Still his pride, or his gravity (call it which you will), is inherent, and native to the man, not mock or affected, which latter only are the fit objects to excite laughter. His quality is at the best unlovely, but neither buffoon nor contemptible. His bearing is lofty, a little above his station, but probably not much above his deserts. We see no reason why he should not have been brave, honourable, accomplished. His careless committal of the ring to the ground (which he was commissioned to restore to Cesario), bespeaks a generosity of birth and feeling.* His dialect on all occasions is that of a gentleman and a man of education. We must not confound him with the eternal old, low steward of comedy. He is master of the household to a great Princess; a dignity probably conferred upon him for other respects than age or length of service.† Olivia, at the first indication of his supposed madness, declares that she "would not have him miscarry for half of her dowry." Does this look as if the character was meant to appear little or insignificant? Once, indeed, she accuses him to his face—of what?—of being "sick of self-love,"—but with a gentleness and considerateness which could not have been, if she had not thought that this particular infirmity shaded some virtues. His rebuke to the knight, and his sottish revellers, is sensible and spirited; and when we take into consideration the unprotected condition of his mistress, and the strict regard with which her state of real or dissembled mourning would draw the eyes of the world upon her house-affairs, Malvolio might feel the honour of the family in some sort in his keeping; as it appears not that Olivia had any more brothers, or kinsmen, to look to it—for Sir Toby had dropped all such nice respects at the buttery hatch. That Malvolio was meant to be represented as possessing estimable qualities, the expression of the Duke in his anxiety to have him reconciled, almost infers: "Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace." Even in his abused state of chains and darkness, a sort of greatness seems never to desert him. He argues highly and well with the supposed Sir Topas,‡ and philosophizes gallantly upon his straw. There must have been some shadow of worth about the man; he must have been something more than a mere vapour—a thing of straw, or Jack in office—before Fabian and Maria could have ventured sending him upon a courting-errand to Olivia. There was some consonancy (as he would say) in the undertaking, or the jest would have been too bold even for that house of misrule. [There was "example for it," said Malvolio; "the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe." Possibly, too, he might remember—for it must have happened about this time—an instance of a Duchess

* [*Viola.* She took the ring from me, I'll none of it.
*Mal.* Come, Sir, you peevishly threw it to her; and her will is, it should be so returned. If it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be it his that finds it.]

† [Mrs. Inchbald seems to have fallen into the common mistake of the character in some otherwise sensible observations on this comedy. "It might be asked," she says, "whether this credulous steward was much deceived in imputing a degraded taste, in the sentiments of love, to his fair lady Olivia, as she actually did fall in love with a domestic, and one who, from his extreme youth, was perhaps a greater reproach to her discretion than had she cast a tender regard upon her old and faithful servant." But where does she gather the fact of his age? Neither Maria nor Fabian ever cast that reproach upon him.]

‡ *Clown.* What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?
*Mal.* That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.
*Clown.* What thinkest thou of his opinion?
*Mal.* I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve of his opinion.

of Malfy (a countrywoman of Olivia's, and her equal at least) descending from her state to court a steward:

> The misery of them that are born great!
> They are forced to woo because none dare woo them."

To be sure, the lady was not very tenderly handled for it by her brothers in the sequel, but their vengeance appears to have been whetted rather by her presumption in re-marrying at all (when they had meditated the keeping of her fortune in their family), than by her choice of an inferior, of Antonio's noble merits especially, for her husband; and, besides, Olivia's brother was just dead. Malvolio was a man of reading, and possibly reflected upon these lines, or something like them, in his own country poetry:—

> "Ceremony has made many fools.
> It is as easy way unto a duchess
> As to a hatted dame, if her love answer:
> But that by timorous honours, pale respects,
> Idle degrees of fear, men make their ways
> Hard of themselves."

"'Tis but fortune; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me; and I have heard herself come thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion." If here was no encouragement, the devil is in it. I wish we could get at the private history of all *this*. Between the countess herself, serious or dissembling—for one hardly *knows* how to apprehend this fantastical great lady—and the practices of that delicious little piece of mischief, Maria, the man might well be rapt into a fool's paradise.]

Bensley, accordingly, threw over the part an air of Spanish loftiness. He looked, spake, and moved like an old Castilian. He was starch, spruce, opinionated; but his superstructure of pride seemed bottomed upon a sense of worth. There was something in it beyond the coxcomb. It was big and swelling, but you could not be sure that it was hollow. You might wish to see it taken down, but you felt that it was upon an elevation. He was magnificent from the outset; but when the decent sobrieties of the character began to give way, and the poison of self-love, in his conceit of the Countess's affection, gradually to work, you would have thought that the hero of La Mancha in person stood before you. How he went smiling to himself! with what ineffable carelessness would he twirl his gold chain! what a dream it was! you were infected with the illusion, and did not wish that it should be removed! you had no room for laughter! if an unseasonable reflection of morality obtruded itself, it was a deep sense of the pitiable infirmity of man's nature, that can lay him open to such frenzies—but in truth you rather admired than pitied the lunacy while it lasted—you felt that an hour of such mistake was worth an age with the eyes open. Who would not wish to live but for a day in the conceit of such a lady's love as Olivia? Why, the Duke would have given his principality but for a quarter of a minute, sleeping or waking, to have been so deluded. The man seemed to tread on air, to taste manna, to walk with his head in the clouds, to mate Hyperion. O! shake not the castles of his pride—endure yet for a season, bright moments of confidence—"stand still, ye watches of the element," that Malvolio may be still in fancy for Olivia's lord—but fate and retribution say no—I hear the mischievous titter of Maria—the witty taunts of Sir Toby—the still more insupportable triumph of the foolish knight—the counterfeit Sir Topas is unmasked—and "thus the whirligig of time," as the true clown hath it, "brings in his revenges." I confess that I never saw the catastrophe of this character, while Bensley played it, without a kind of tragic interest. There was good foolery too. Few now remember Dodd. What an

Aguecheek the stage lost in him! Lovegrove, who came nearest to the old actors, revived the character some few seasons ago, and made it sufficiently grotesque; but Dodd was *it*, as it came out of nature's hands. It might be said to remain *in puris naturalibus*. In expressing slowness of apprehension this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling, than it took to cover the expansion of his broad moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder.

I am ill at dates, but I think it is now better than five-and-twenty years ago, that walking in the gardens of Gray's Inn—they were then far finer than they are now—the accursed Verulam Buildings had not encroached upon all the east side of them, cutting out delicate green crankles, and shouldering away one or two of the stately alcoves of the terrace—the survivor stands gaping and relationless as if it remembered its brother—they are still the best gardens of any of the Inns of Court, my beloved Temple not forgotten—have the gravest character, their aspect being altogether reverend and law-breathing—Bacon has left the impress of his foot upon their gravel walks—taking my afternoon solace on a summer day upon the aforesaid terrace, a comely sad personage came towards me, whom, from his grave air and deportment, I judged to be one of the Benchers of the Inn. He had a serious thoughtful forehead, and seemed to be in meditations of mortality. As I have an instinctive awe of old Benchers, I was passing him with that sort of subindicative token of respect which one is apt to demonstrate towards a venerable stranger, and which rather denotes an inclination to greet him, than any positive motion of the body to that effect—a species of humility and will-worship which I observe, nine times out of ten, rather puzzles than pleases the person it is offered to—when the face turning full upon me strangely identified itself with that of Dodd. Upon close inspection I was not mistaken. But could this sad thoughtful countenance be the same vacant face of folly which I had hailed so often under circumstances of gaiety; which I had never seen without a smile, or recognized but as the usher of mirth; that looked out so formally flat in Foppington, so frothily pert in Tattle, so impotently busy in Backbite; so blankly divested of all meaning, or resolutely expressive of none, in Acres, in Fribble, and a thousand agreeable impertinences? Was this the face—full of thought and carefulness—that had so often divested itself at will of every trace of either to give me diversion, to clear my cloudy face for two or three hours at least of its furrows? Was this the face—manly, sober, intelligent,—which I had so often despised, made mocks at, made merry with? The remembrance of the freedoms which I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon. I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury. There is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors—your pleasant fellows particularly—subjected to and suffering the common lot—their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene, their actions to be amenable to poetic justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities. The death of this fine actor took place shortly after this meeting. He had quitted the stage some months; and as I learned afterwards, had been in the habit of resorting daily to these gardens almost to the day of his decease. In these serious walks probably he was divesting himself of many scenic and some real vanities—weaning himself from the frivolities of the lesser and greater theatre—doing gentle penance for a life of no very reprehensible fooleries,—taking off by degrees the buffoon mask which he

might feel he had worn too long—and rehearsing for a more solemn cast of part. Dying, he "put on the weeds of Dominic."*

[I do not know a more mortifying thing than to be conscious of a foregone delight, with a total oblivion of the person and manner which conveyed it. In dreams, I often stretch and strain after the countenance of Edwin, whom I once saw in *Peeping Tom.* I cannot catch a feature of him. He is no more to me than Nokes or Pinkethman. Parsons, and, still more, Dodd, were near being lost to me till I was refreshed with their portraits (fine treat) the other day at Mr. Matthews's gallery at Highgate; which, with the exception of the Hogarth pictures, a few years since exhibited in Pall Mall, was the most delightful collection I ever gained admission to. There hang the players, in their single persons and in grouped scenes, from the Restoration,—Bettertons, Booths, Garricks,—justifying the prejudices which we entertain for them; the Bracegirdles, the Mountforts, and the Oldfields, fresh as Cibber has described them; the Woffington (a true Hogarth) upon a couch, dallying and dangerous; the screen scene in Brinsley's famous comedy; with Smith and Mrs. Abingdon, whom I have not seen; and the rest, whom, having seen, I see still there. There is Henderson, unrivalled in Comus, whom I saw at secondhand in the elder Harley; Harley, the rival of Holman, in Horatio; Holman, with the bright glittering teeth, in Lothario, and the deep pavior's sighs in Romeo, the jolliest person ("our son is fat") of any Hamlet I have yet seen, with the most laudable attempts (for a personable man) at looking melancholy; and Pope, the abdicated monarch of tragedy and comedy, in Harry the Eighth and Lord Townley. There hang the two Aickins, brethren in mediocrity; Wroughton, who in Kitely seemed to have forgotten that in prouder days he had personated Alexander; the specious form of John Palmer, with the special effrontery of Bobby; Bensley, with the trumpet-tongue; and little Quick (the retired Dioclesian of Islington), with his squeak like a Bart'lemew fiddle. There are fixed, cold as in life, the immovable features of Moody, who, afraid of o'erstepping Nature, sometimes stopped short of her; and the restless fidgetiness of Lewis, who, with no such fears, not seldom leaped o' the other side. There hang Farren and Whitfield, and Burton and Phillimore, names of small account in those times, but which, remembered now, or casually recalled by the sight of an old play-bill, with their associated recordations, can "drown an eye unused to flow." There too hangs, not far removed from them in death, the graceful plainness of the first Mrs. Pope, with a voice unstrung by age, but which in her better days must have competed with the silver tones of Barry himself, so enchanting in decay do I remember it,—of all her lady parts, exceeding herself in the *Lady Quakeress* (there earth-touched heaven!) of O'Keefe, when she played it to the "merry cousin" of Lewis; and Mrs. Mallocks, the sensiblest of viragoes; and Miss Pope, a gentlewoman ever, to the verge of ungentility, with Churchill's compliment still burnishing upon her gay Honeycomb lips. There are the two Bannisters, and Sedgwick, and Kelly, and Dignum (Diggy), and the bygone features of Mrs. Ward, matchless in Lady Loverule; and the collective majesty of the whole Kemble family; and (Shakspere's woman) Dora Jordan; and, by her, *two Antics*, who, in former and in latter days, have chiefly beguiled us of our griefs; whose portraits we shall strive to recall, for the sympathy of those who may not have had the benefit of viewing the matchless Highgate collection.

* Dodd was a man of reading, and left at his death a choice collection of old English literature. I should judge him to have been a man of wit. I know one instance of an impromptu which no length of study could have bettered. My merry friend, Jem White, had seen him one evening in Aguecheek, and, recognizing Dodd the next day in Fleet Street, was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat and salute him as the identical Knight of the preceding evening with a "Save you, *Sir Andrew.*" Dodd, not at all disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger, with a courteous half-rebuking wave of the hand, put him off with an "Away, *Fool.*"

O for a "slip-shod muse," to celebrate in numbers, loose and shambling as himself, the merits and the person of Mr. Richard Suett, Comedian!] If few can remember Dodd, many yet living will not easily forget the pleasant creature, who in those days enacted the part of the Clown to Dodd's Sir Andrew.—Richard, or rather Dicky Suett—for so in his lifetime he delighted to be called, and time hath ratified the appellation—lieth buried on the north side of the cemetery of Holy Paul, to whose service his nonage and tender years were dedicated. There are who do yet remember him at that period—his pipe clear and harmonious. He would often speak of his chorister days, when he was "cherub Dicky."

What clipped his wings, or made it expedient that he should exchange the holy for the profane state; whether he had last his good voice (his best recommendation to that office), like Sir John, "with hallooing and singing of anthems;" or whether he was adjudged to lack something, even in those early years, of the gravity indispensable to an occupation which professeth to "commerce with the skies"—I could never rightly learn; but we find him, after the probation of a twelvemonth or so, reverting to a secular condition, and become one of us.

I think he was not altogether of that timber out of which cathedral seats and sounding-boards are hewed. But if a glad heart—kind and therefore glad—be any part of sanctity, then might the robe of Motley, with which he invested himself with so much humility after his deprivation, and which he wore so long with so much blameless satisfaction to himself and to the public, be accepted for a surplice—his white stole, and *albe.*

The first fruits of his secularization was an engagement upon the boards of Old Drury, at which theatre he commenced, as I have been told, with adopting the manner of Parsons in old men's characters. At the period in which most of us knew him, he was no more an imitator than he was in any true sense himself inimitable.

He was the Robin Good-Fellow of the stage. He came in to trouble all things with a welcome perplexity, himself no whit troubled for the matter. He was known, like Puck, by his note—*Ha! Ha! Ha!*—sometimes deepening to *Ho! Ho! Ho!* with an irresistible accession derived perhaps remotely from his ecclesiastical education, foreign to his prototype of,—*O La!* Thousands of hearts yet respond to the chuckling *O La!* of Dicky Suett, brought back to their remembrance by the faithful transcript of his friend Mathews's mimicry. The "force of nature could no farther go." He drolled upon the stock of these two syllables richer than the cuckoo.

Care, that troubles all the world, was forgotten in his composition. Had he had but two grains (nay, half a grain) of it, he could never have supported himself upon those two spider's strings, which served him (in the latter part of his unmixed existence) as legs. A doubt or a scruple must have made him totter, a sigh have puffed him down; the weight of a frown had staggered him, a wrinkle made him lose his balance. But on he went, scrambling upon those airy stilts of his, with Robin Good-Fellow, "thorough brake, thorough briar," reckless of a scratched face or a torn doublet.

Shakspere foresaw him, when he framed his fools and jesters. They have all the true Suett stamp, a loose and shambling gait, a slippery tongue, this last the ready midwife to a without-pain-delivered jest; in words, light as air, venting truths deep as the centre; with idlest rhymes tagging conceit when busiest, singing with Lear in the tempest, or Sir Toby at the buttery-hatch.

Jack Bannister and he had the fortune to be more of personal favourites with the town than any actors before or after. The difference, I take it, was this:—Jack was more *beloved* for his sweet, good-natured, moral pretensions. Dicky was more *liked* for his sweet, good-natured, no pretensions at all. Your whole conscience stirred with Bannister's performance of Walter in the

Children in the Wood—but Dicky seemed like a thing, as Shakspeare says of Love, too young to know what conscience is. He puts us into Vesta's days. Evil fled before him—not as from Jack, as from an antagonist,—but because it could not touch him, any more than a cannon-ball a fly. He was delivered from the burthen of that death; and when Death came himself, not in metaphor, to fetch Dicky, it is recorded of him by Robert Palmer, who kindly watched his exit, that he received the last stroke, neither varying his accustomed tranquillity, nor tune, with the simple exclamation, worthy to have been recorded in his epitaph—*O La! O La! Bobby!*

The elder Palmer (of stage-treading celebrity) commonly played Sir Toby in those days; but there is a solidity of wit in the jests of that half-Falstaff which he did not quite fill out. He was as much too showy as Moody (who sometimes took the part) was dry and sottish. In sock or buskin there was an air of swaggering gentility about Jack Palmer. He was a *gentleman* with a slight infusion of *the footman*. His brother Bob (of recenter memory), who was his shadow in everything while he lived, and dwindled into less than a shadow afterwards—was a *gentleman* with a little stronger infusion of the *latter ingredient;* that was all. It is amazing how a little of the more or less makes a difference in these things. When you saw Bobby in the Duke's Servant,* you said, what a pity such a pretty-fellow was only a servant. When you saw Jack figuring in Captain Absolute, you thought you could trace his promotion to some lady of quality who fancied the handsome fellow in his top-knot, and had bought him a commission. Therefore Jack in Dick Amlet was insuperable.

Jack had two voices,—both plausible, hypocritical, and insinuating; but his secondary or supplemental voice still more decisively histrionic than his common one. It was reserved for the spectator; and the *dramatis personæ* were supposed to know nothing at all about it. The *lies* of young Wilding, and the *sentiments* in Joseph Surface, were thus marked out in a sort of italics to the audience. This secret correspondence with the company before the curtain (which is the bane and death of tragedy) has an extremely happy effect in some kinds of comedy, in the more highly artificial comedy of Congreve or of Sheridan especially, where the absolute sense of reality (so indispensable to scenes of interest) is not required, or would rather interfere to diminish your pleasure. The fact is, you do not believe in such characters as Surface—the villain of artificial comedy—even while you read or see them. If you did, they would shock and not divert you. When Ben, in Love for Love, returns from sea, the following exquisite dialogue occurs at his first meeting with his father:—

> *Sir Sampson.* Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.
> *Ben.* Ey, ey, been! Been far enough, an that be all.—Well, father, and how do all at home? how does brother Dick, and brother Val?
> *Sir Sampson.* Dick! body o' me, Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.
> *Ben.* Mess, that's true; Marry, I had forgot. Dick's dead, as you say—Well, and how?—I have a many questions to ask you—

Here is an instance of insensibility which in real life would be revolting, or rather in real life could not have co-existed with the warm-hearted temperament of the character. But when you read it in the spirit with which such playful selections and specious combinations rather than strict *metaphrases* of nature should be taken, or when you saw Bannister play it, it neither did, nor does, wound the moral sense at all. For what is Ben—the pleasant sailor which Bannister gives us—but a piece of satire—a creation of Congreve's fancy—a dreamy combination of all the accidents of a sailor's character—his

* High Life Below Stairs.

contempt of money—his credulity to women—with that necessary estrangement from home which it is just within the verge of credibility to suppose *might* produce such an hallucination as is here described. We never think the worse of Ben for it, or feel it as a stain upon his character. But when an actor comes, and instead of the delightful phantom—the creature dear to half-belief—which Bannister exhibited—displays before our eyes a downright concretion of a Wapping sailor—a jolly warm-hearted Jack Tar—and nothing else—when instead of investing it with a delicious confusedness of the head, and a veering undirected goodness of purpose—he gives to it a downright daylight understanding, and a full consciousness of its actions; thrusting forward the sensibilities of the character with a pretence as if it stood upon nothing else, and was to be judged by them alone—we feel the discord of the thing; the scene is disturbed; a real man has got in among the *dramatis personæ*, and puts them out. We want the sailor turned out. We feel that his true place is not behind the curtain but in the first or second gallery.

# Distant Correspondents.

## IN A LETTER TO B. F. ESQ., AT SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

(*The London Magazine*, March, 1822.)

["B. F." meant Barron Field (already twice named in these notes) who, for some years, held in New South Wales an important judicial appointment, and who eventually became the Chief Justice of Gibraltar. Sally W——r stood for Sally Winter. "J. W." was Elia's old schoolfellow, James White, author of an ingenious little book purporting to be the "Letters of Sir John Falstaff, Knight," a curiosity of literature in the composition of which, according to Southey's statement, Charles Lamb himself was James White's collaborateur.]

My dear F.—When I think how welcome the sight of a letter from the world where you were born must be to you in that strange one to which you have been transplanted, I feel some compunctious visitings at my long silence. But, indeed, it is no easy effort to set about a correspondence at our distance. The weary world of waters between us oppresses the imagination. It is difficult to conceive how a scrawl of mine should ever stretch across it. It is a sort of presumption to expect that one's thoughts should live so far. It is like writing for posterity; and reminds me of one of Mrs. Rowe's superscriptions, "Alcander to Strephon, in the Shades." Cowley's Post-Angel is no more than would be expedient in such an intercourse. One drops a packet at Lombard Street, and in twenty-four hours a friend in Cumberland gets it as fresh as if it came in ice. It is only like whispering through a long trumpet. But suppose a tube let down from the moon, with yourself at one end, and *the man* at the other; it would be some balk to the spirit of conversation, if you knew that the dialogue exchanged with that interesting theosophist would take two or three revolutions of a higher luminary in its passage. Yet for ought I know, you may be some parasangs nigher that primitive idea—Plato's man—than we in England here have the honour to reckon ourselves.

Epistolary matter usually compriseth three topics; news, sentiment, and puns. In the latter, I include all non-serious subjects; or subjects serious in

themselves, but treated after my fashion, non-seriously.—And first, for news. In them the most desirable circumstance, I suppose, is that they shall be true. But what security can I have that what I now send you for truth shall not before you get it unaccountably turn into a lie? For instance, our mutual friend P. is at this present writing—*my Now*—in good health, and enjoys a fair share of worldly reputation. You are glad to hear it. This is natural and friendly. But at this present reading—*your Now*—he may possibly be in the Bench, or going to be hanged, which in reason ought to abate something of your transport (*i.e.*, at hearing he was well, &c.), or at least considerably to modify it. I am going to the play this evening, to have a laugh with Munden. You have no theatre, I think you told me, in your land of d——d realities. You naturally lick your lips, and envy me my felicity. Think but a moment, and you will correct the hateful emotion. Why, it is Sunday morning with you, and 1823. This confusion of tenses, this grand solecism of *two presents*, is in a degree common to all postage. But if I sent you word to Bath or the Devizes, that I was expecting the aforesaid treat this evening, though at the moment you received the intelligence my full feast of fun would be over, yet there would be for a day or two after, as you would well know, a smack, a relish left upon my mental palate, which would give rational encouragement for you to foster a portion at least of the disagreeable passion, which it was in part my intention to produce. But ten months hence, your envy or your sympathy would be as useless as a passion spent upon the dead. Not only does truth, in these long intervals, un-essence herself, but (what is harder) one cannot venture a crude fiction for the fear that it may ripen into a truth upon the voyage. What a wild improbable banter I put upon you some three years since—of Will Wetherall having married a servant-maid! I remember gravely consulting you how we were to receive her—for Will's wife was in no case to be rejected; and your no less serious replication in the matter; how tenderly you advised an abstemious introduction of literary topics before the lady, with a caution not to be too forward in bringing on the carpet matters more within the sphere of her intelligence; your deliberate judgment, or rather wise suspension of sentence, how far jacks, and spits, and mops could with propriety be introduced as subjects; whether the conscious avoiding of all such matters in discourse would not have a worse look than the taking of them casually in our way; in what manner we should carry ourselves to our maid Becky, Mrs. William Weatherall being by; whether we should show more delicacy, and a truer sense of respect for Will's wife, by treating Becky with our customary chiding before her, or by an unusual deferential civility paid to Becky as to a person of great worth, but thrown by the caprice of fate into a humble station. There were difficulties, I remember, on both sides, which you did me the favour to state with the precision of a lawyer, united to the tenderness of a friend. I laughed in my sleeve at your solemn pleadings, when lo! while I was valuing myself upon this flam put upon you in New South Wales, the devil in England, jealous possibly of any lie-children not his own, or working after my copy, has actually instigated our friend (not three days since) to the commission of a matrimony, which I had only conjured up for your diversion. William Weatherall has married Mrs. Cotterel's maid. But to take it in its truest sense, you will see, my dear F., that news from me must become history to you; which I neither profess to write, nor indeed care much for reading. No person, under a diviner, can with any prospect of veracity, conduct a correspondence at such an arm's length. Two prophets, indeed, might thus interchange intelligence with effect; the epoch of the writer (Habakkuk) falling in with the true present time of the receiver (Daniel); but then we are no prophets.

Then as to sentiment. It fares little better with that. This kind of dish, above all, requires to be served up hot: or sent off in water-plates, that your

friend may have it almost as warm as yourself. If it have time to cool, it is the most tasteless of all cold meats. I have often smiled at a conceit of the late Lord C. It seems that travelling somewhere about Geneva, he came to some pretty green spot, or nook, where a willow, or something, hung so fantastically and invitingly over a stream—was it?—or a rock?—no matter—but the stillness and the repose, after a weary journey 'tis likely, in a languid moment of his lordship's hot restless life, so took his fancy, that he could imagine no place so proper, in the event of his death, to lay his bones in. This was all very natural and excusable as a sentiment, and shows his character in a very pleasing light. But when from a passing sentiment it came to be an act; and when, by a positive testamentary disposal, his remains were actually carried all that way from England; who was there, some desperate sentimentalists excepted, that did not ask the question, Why could not his lordship have found a spot as solitary, a nook as romantic, a tree as green and pendant, with a stream as emblematic to his purpose, in Surrey, in Dorset, or in Devon? Conceive the sentiment boarded up, freighted, entered at the Custom House (startling the tide-waiters with the novelty), hoisted into a ship. Conceive it pawed about and handled between the rude jests of tarpaulin ruffians—a thing of its delicate texture—the salt bilge wetting it till it became as vapid as a damaged lustring. Suppose it in material danger (mariners have some superstition about sentiments) of being tossed over in a fresh gale to some propitiatory shark (spirit of St. Gothard, save us from a quietus so foreign to the deviser's purpose!) but it has happily evaded a fishy consummation. Trace it then to its lucky landing—at Lyons shall we say?—I have not the map before me—jostled upon four men's shoulders—baiting at this town—stopping to refresh at t'other village—waiting a passport here, a licence there; the sanction of the magistracy in this district, the concurrence of the ecclesiastics in that canton; till at length it arrives at its destination, tired out and jaded, from a brisk sentiment, into a feature of silly pride or tawdry, senseless affectation. How few sentiments, my dear F., I am afraid we can set down, in the sailor's phrase, as quite seaworthy.

Lastly, as to the agreeable levities, which, though contemptible in bulk, are the twinkling corpuscula which should irradiate a right friendly epistle—your puns and small jests are, I apprehend, extremely circumscribed in their sphere of action. They are so far from a capacity of being packed up and sent beyond sea, they will scarce endure to be transported by hand from this room to the next. Their vigour is as the instant of their birth. Their nutriment for their brief existence is the intellectual atmosphere of the bystanders: or this last, is the fine slime of Nilus—the *melior lutus*,—whose maternal recipiency is as necessary as the *sol pater* to their equivocal generation. A pun hath a hearty kind of present ear-kissing smack with it; you can no more transmit it in its pristine flavour, than you can send a kiss.—Have you not tried in some instances to palm off a yesterday's pun upon a gentleman, and has it answered? Not but it was new to his hearing, but it did not seem to come new from you. It did not hitch in. It was like picking up at a village ale-house a two days' old newspaper. You have not seen it before, but you resent the stale thing as an affront. This sort of merchandise above all requires a quick return. A pun, and its recognitory laugh, must be co-instantaneous. The one is the brisk lightning, the other the fierce thunder. A moment's interval, and the link is snapped. A pun is reflected from a friend's face as from a mirror. Who would consult his sweet visnomy, if the polished surface were two or three minutes (not to speak of twelve months, my dear F.) in giving back its copy?

I cannot imagine to myself whereabout you are. When I try to fix it, Peter Wilkins's island comes across me. Sometimes you seem to be in the *Hades of Thieves*. I see Diogenes prying among you with his perpetual fruitless lantern. What must you be willing by this time to give for the sight of an

honest man! You must almost have forgotten how *we* look. And tell me, what your Sydneyites do? are they th**v*ng all day long? Merciful heaven! what property can stand against such a depredation! The kangaroos—your Aborigines—do they keep their primitive simplicity un-Europe-tainted, with those little short fore-puds, looking like a lesson framed by nature to the pick-pocket! Marry, for diving into fobs they are rather lamely provided *à priori;* but if the hue and cry were once up, they would show as fair a pair of hind-shifters as the expertest loco-motor in the colony.—We hear the most improbable tales at this distance. Pray, is it true that the young Spartans among you are born with six fingers, which spoils their scanning?—It must look very odd; but use reconciles. For their scansion, it is less to be regretted, for if they take it into their heads to be poets, it is odds but they turn out, the greater part of them, vile plagiarists.—Is there much difference to see to between the son of a th**f, and the grandson? or where does the taint stop? Do you bleach in three or in four generations?—I have many questions to put, but ten Delphic voyages can be made in a shorter time than it will take to satisfy my scruples.—Do you grow your own hemp!—What is your staple trade, exclusive of the national profession, I mean? Your lock-smiths, I take it, are some of your great capitalists.

I am insensibly chattering to you as familiarly as when we used to exchange good-morrows out of our old contiguous windows, in pump-famed Hare Court in the Temple. Why did you ever leave that quiet corner?—Why did I?—with its complement of four poor elms, from whose smoke-dried barks, the theme of jesting ruralists, I picked my first lady-birds! My heart is as dry as that spring sometimes proves in a thirsty August, when I revert to the space that is between us; a length of passage enough to render obsolete the phrases of our English letters before they can reach you. But while I talk, I think you hear me,—thoughts dallying with vain surmise—

> Ay me! while thee the seas and sounding shores
> Hold far away.

Come back, before I am grown into a very old man, so as you shall hardly know me. Come, before Bridget walks on crutches. Girls whom you left children have become sage matrons, while you are tarrying there. The blooming Miss W——r (you remember Sally W——r) called upon us yesterday, an aged crone. Folks, whom you knew, die off every year. Formerly, I thought that death was wearing out,—I stood ramparted about with so many healthy friends. The departure of J. W., two springs back, corrected my delusion. Since then the old divorcer has been busy. If you do not make haste to return, there will be little left to greet you, of me, or mine.

[Something of home matters I could add; but *that*, with certain remembrances never to be omitted, I reserve for the grave postscript to this light epistle; which postscript, for weighty reasons, justifactory in any court of feeling, I think better omitted in this first edition. London, March 1st, 1822. Elia.]

# On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century.

(*The London Magazine*, April, 1822.)

[As originally published, this essay formed the second instalment of the article on "The Old Actors." "M." is understood to have been Mr. Marshall, an old intimate of William Godwin. "R——s," was probably Reynolds the Dramatist, not Frederick Reynolds, but John Hamilton Reynolds, one of the regular staff of contributors to the *London Magazine*.]

THE artificial Comedy, or Comedy of manners, is quite extinct on our stage. Congreve and Farquhar show their heads once in seven years only, to be exploded and put down instantly. The times cannot bear them. Is it for a few wild speeches, an occasional licence of dialogue? I think not altogether. The business of their dramatic characters will not stand the moral test. We screw everything up to that. Idle gallantry in a fiction, a dream, the passing pageant of an evening, startles us in the same way as the alarming indications of profligacy in a son or ward in real life should startle a parent or guardian. We have no such middle emotions as dramatic interests left. We see a stage libertine playing his loose pranks of two hours' duration, and of no after-consequence, with the severe eyes which inspect real vices with their bearings upon two worlds. We are spectators to a plot or intrigue (not reducible in life to the point of strict morality) and take it all for truth. We substitute a real for a dramatic person, and judge him accordingly. We try bim in our courts, from which there is no appeal to the *dramatis personæ*, his peers. We have been spoiled with—not sentimental comedy—but a tyrant far more pernicious to our pleasures which has succeeded to it, the exclusive and all-devouring drama of common life; where the moral point is everything; where, instead of the fictitious half-believed personages of the stage (the phantoms of old comedy) we recognize ourselves, our brothers, aunts, kinsfolk, allies, patrons, enemies,—the same as in life,—with an interest in what is going on so hearty and substantial, that we cannot afford our moral judgment, in its deepest and most vital results, to compromise or slumber for a moment. What is *there* transacting, by no modification is made to affect us in any other manner than the same events or characters would do in our relationships of life. We carry our fireside concerns to the theatre with us. We do not go thither, like our ancestors, to escape from the pressure of reality, so much as to confirm our experience of it; to make assurance double, and take a bond of fate. We must live our toilsome lives twice over, as it was the mournful privilege of Ulysses to descend twice to the shades. All that neutral ground of character, which stood between vice and virtue; or which in fact was indifferent to neither, where neither property was called in question; that happy breathing-place from the burthen of a perpetual moral questioning—the sanctuary and quiet Alsatia of hunted casuistry—is broken up and disfranchised, as injurious to the interests of society. The privileges of the place are taken away by law. We dare not dally with images, or names, of wrong. We bark like foolish dogs at shadows. We dread infection from the scenic representation of disorder; and fear a painted pustule. In our anxiety that our morality should not take cold, we wrap it up in a great blanket surtout of precaution against the breeze and sunshine.

I confess for myself that (with no great delinquencies to answer for) I am glad for a season to take an airing beyond the diocese of the strict conscience, —not to live always in the precincts of the law courts,—but now and then, for a dream-while or so, to imagine a world with no meddling restrictions—to get into recesses, whither the hunter cannot follow me—

> ————Secret shades
> Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
> While yet there was no fear of Jove—

I come back to my cage and my restraint the fresher and more healthy for it. I wear my shackles more contentedly for having respired the breath of an imaginary freedom. I do not know how it is with others, but I feel the better always for the perusal of one of Congreve's—nay, why should I not add even of Wycherley's—comedies. I am the gayer at least for it; and I could never connect those sports of a witty fancy in any shape with any result to be drawn from them to imitation in real life. They are a world of themselves almost as much as fairyland. Take one of their characters, male or female (with few exceptions they are alike), and place it in a modern play, and my virtuous indignation shall rise against the profligate wretch as warmly as the Catos of the pit could desire; because in a modern play I am to judge of the right and the wrong. The standard of *police* is the measure of *political justice.* The atmosphere will blight it, it cannot live here. It has got into a moral world, where it has no business, from which it must needs fall headlong; as dizzy and incapable of making a stand, as a Swedenborgian bad spirit that has wandered unawares into the sphere of one of his Good Men, or Angels. But in its own world do we feel the creature is so very bad?—The Fainalls and the Mirabels, the Dorimants and the Lady Touchwoods, in their own sphere, do not offend my moral sense; in fact, they do not appeal to it at all. They seem engaged in their proper element. They break through no laws, or conscientious restraints. They know of none. They have got out of Christendom into the land—what shall I call it?—of cuckoldry—the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom. It is altogether a speculative scene of things, which has no reference whatever to the world that is. No good person can be justly offended as a spectator, because no good person suffers on the stage. Judged morally, every character in these plays—the few exceptions only are *mistakes*—is alike essentially vain and worthless. The great art of Congreve is especially shown in this, that he has entirely excluded from his scenes,—some little generosities in the part of Angelica perhaps excepted,—not only anything like a faultless character, but any pretensions to goodness or good feelings whatsoever. Whether he did this designedly, or instinctively, the effect is as happy, as the design (if design) was bold. I used to wonder at the strange power which his Way of the World in particular possesses of interesting you all along in the pursuits of characters, for whom you absolutely care nothing—for you neither hate nor love his personages—and I think it is owing to this very indifference for any, that you endure the whole. He has spread a privation of moral light, I will call it, rather than by the ugly name of palpable darkness, over his creations; and his shadows flit before you without distinction or preference. Had he introduced a good character, a single gush of moral feeling, a revulsion of the judgment to actual life and actual duties, the impertinent Goshen would have only lighted to the discovery of deformities, which now are none, because we think them none.

Translated into real life, the characters of his, and his friend Wycherley's dramas, are profligates and strumpets,—the business of their brief existence, the undivided pursuit of lawless gallantry. No other spring of action, or possible motive of conduct, is recognized; principles which, universally acted upon, must reduce this frame of things to a chaos. But we do them wrong in

so translating them. No such effects are produced in *their* world. When we are among them, we are amongst a chaotic people. We are not to judge them by our usages. No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings,—for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated,—for no family ties exist among them. No purity of the marriage bed is stained,—for none is supposed to have a being. No deep affections are disquieted,—no holy wedlock bands are snapped asunder,—for affection's depth and wedded faith are not of the growth of that soil. There is neither right nor wrong,—gratitude or its opposite,—claim or duty,—paternity or sonship. Of what consequence is it to virtue, or how is she at all concerned about it, whether Sir Simon, or Dapperwit, steal away Miss Martha; or who is the father of Lord Froth's, or Sir Paul Pliant's children?

The whole is a passing pageant, where we should sit as unconcerned at the issues, for life or death, as at a battle of the frogs and mice. But like Don Quixote, we take part against the puppets, and quite as impertinently. We dare not contemplate an Atlantis, a scheme, out of which our coxcombical moral sense is for a little transitory ease excluded. We have not the courage to imagine a state of things for which there is neither reward nor punishment. We cling to the painful necessities of shame and blame. We would indict our very dreams.

Amidst the mortifying circumstances attendant upon growing old, it is something to have seen the School for Scandal in its glory. This comedy grew out of Congreve and Wycherley, but gathered some allays of the sentimental comedy which followed theirs. It is impossible that it should be now *acted*, though it continues, at long intervals, to be announced in the bills. Its hero, when Palmer played it at least, was Joseph Surface. When I remember the gay boldness, the graceful solemn plausibility, the measured step, the insinuating voice—to express it in a word—the downright *acted* villany of the part, so different from the pressure of conscious actual wickedness,—the hypocritical assumption of hypocrisy,—which made Jack so deservedly a favourite in that character, I must needs conclude the present generation of playgoers more virtuous than myself, or more dense. I freely confess that he divided the palm with me with his better brother; that, in fact, I liked him quite as well. Not but there are passages,—like that, for instance, where Joseph is made to refuse a pittance to a poor relation,—incongruities which Sheridan was forced upon by the attempt to join the artificial with the sentimental comedy, either of which must destroy the other—but over these obstructions Jack's manner floated him so lightly, that a refusal from him no more shocked you, than the easy compliance of Charles gave you in reality any pleasure; you got over the paltry question as quickly as you could, to get back into the regions of pure comedy, where no cold moral reigns. The highly artificial manner of Palmer in this character counteracted every disagreeable impression which you might have received from the contrast, supposing them real, between the two brothers. You did not believe in Joseph with the same faith with which you believed in Charles. The latter was a pleasant reality, the former a no less pleasant poetical foil to it. The comedy, I have said, is incongruous; a mixture of Congreve with sentimental incompatibilities: the gaiety upon the whole is buoyant; but it required the consummate art of Palmer to reconcile the discordant elements.

A player with Jack's talents, if we had one now, would not dare to do the part in the same manner. He would instinctively avoid every turn which might tend to unrealize, and so to make the character fascinating. He must take his cue from his spectators, who would expect a bad man and a good man as rigidly opposed to each other as the death-beds of those geniuses are contrasted in the prints, which I am sorry to say have disappeared from the windows of my old friend Carrington Bowles, of St. Paul's Church-yard memory

—(an exhibition as venerable as the adjacent cathedral, and almost coeval) of the bad and good man at the hour of death; where the ghastly apprehensions of the former,—and truly the grim phantom with his reality of a toasting fork is not to be despised,—so finely contrast with the meek complacent kissing of the rod,—taking it in like honey and butter,—with which the latter submits to the scythe of the gentle bleeder, Time, who wields his lancet with the apprehensive finger of a popular young ladies' surgeon. What flesh, like loving grass, would not covet to meet half-way the stroke of such a delicate mower? —John Palmer was twice an actor in this exquisite part. He was playing to you all the while that he was playing upon Sir Peter and his lady. You had the first intimation of a sentiment before it was on his lips. His altered voice was meant to you, and you were to suppose that his fictitious co-flutterers on the stage perceived nothing at all of it. What was it to you if that half-reality, the husband, was over-reached by the puppetry—or the thin thing (Lady Teazle's reputation) was persuaded it was dying of a plethory? The fortunes of Othello and Desdemona were not concerned in it. Poor Jack has passed from the stage in good time, that he did not live to this our age of seriousness. The pleasant old Teazle *King*, too, is gone in good time. His manner would scarce have passed current in our day. We must love or hate —acquit or condemn—censure or pity—exert our detestable coxcombry of moral judgment upon everything. Joseph Surface, to go down now, must be a downright revolting villain—no compromise—his first appearance must shock and give horror—his specious plausibilities, which the pleasurable faculties of our fathers welcomed with such hearty greetings, knowing that no harm (dramatic harm even) could come, or was meant to come of them, must inspire a cold and killing aversion. Charles (the real canting person of the scene—for the hypocrisy of Joseph has its ulterior legitimate ends, but his brother's professions of a good heart centre in downright self-satisfaction) must be *loved*, and Joseph *hated*. To balance one disagreeable reality with another, Sir Peter Teazle must be no longer the comic idea of a fretful old bachelor bridegroom, whose teasings (while King acted it) were evidently as much played off at you, as they were meant to concern anybody on the stage,—he must be a real person, capable in law of sustaining an injury—a person towards whom duties are to be acknowledged—the genuine crim-con. antagonist of the villanous seducer Joseph. To realize him more, his sufferings under his unfortunate match must have the downright pungency of life—must (or should) make you not mirthful but uncomfortable, just as the same predicament would move you in a neighbour or old friend. The delicious scenes which give the play its name and zest, must affect you in the same serious manner as if you heard the reputation of a dear female friend attacked in your real presence. Crabtree, and Sir Benjamin—those poor snakes that live but in the sunshine of your mirth—must be ripened by this hot-bed process of realization into asps or amphisbænas; and Mrs. Candour—O! frightful! become a hooded serpent. Oh who that remembers Parsons and Dodd—the wasp and butterfly of the School for Scandal—in those two characters; and charming natural Miss Pope, the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy, in this latter part—would forego the true scenic delight—the escape from life—the oblivion of consequences—the holiday barring out of the pedant Reflection—those Saturnalia of two or three brief hours, well won from the world—to sit instead at one of our modern plays—to have his coward conscience (that forsooth must not be left for a moment) stimulated with perpetual appeals—dulled rather, and blunted, as a faculty without repose must be—and his moral vanity pampered with images of notional justice, notional beneficence, lives saved without the spectators' risk, and fortunes given away that cost the author nothing?

No piece was, perhaps, ever so completely cast in all its parts as this

*manager's comedy.* Miss Farren had succeeded to Mrs. Abingdon in Lady Teazle; and Smith, the original Charles, had retired, when I first saw it. The rest of the characters, with very slight exceptions, remained. I remember it was then the fashion to cry down John Kemble, who took the part of Charles after Smith; but, I thought, very unjustly. Smith, I fancy, was more airy, and took the eye with a certain gaiety of person. He brought with him no sombre recollections of tragedy. He had not to expiate the fault of having pleased beforehand in lofty declamation. He had no sins of Hamlet or of Richard to atone for. His failure in these parts was a passport to success in one of so opposite a tendency. But, as far as I could judge, the weighty sense of Kemble made up for more personal incapacity than he had to answer for. His harshest tones in this part came steeped and dulcified in good humour. He made his defects a grace. His exact declamatory manner, as he managed it, only served to convey the points of his dialogue with more precision. It seemed to head the shafts to carry them deeper. Not one of his sparkling sentences was lost. I remember minutely how he delivered each in succession, and cannot by any effort imagine how any of them could be altered for the better. No man could deliver brilliant dialogue—the dialogue of Congreve or of Wycherley—because none understood it—half so well as John Kemble. His Valentine, in Love for Love, was to my recollection, faultless. He flagged sometimes in the intervals of tragic passion. He would slumber over the level parts of an heroic character. His Macbeth has been known to nod. But he always seemed to me to be particularly alive to pointed and witty dialogue. The relaxing levities of tragedy have not been touched by any since him—the playful court-bred spirit in which he condescended to the players in Hamlet—the sportive relief which he threw into the darker shades of Richard—disappeared with him. [Tragedy has become a uniform dead weight. They have fastened lead to their buskins. She never pulls them off for the ease of a moment. To invert a commonplace from Niobe, she never forgets herself to liquefaction.] John had his sluggish moods, his torpors—but they were the halting-stones and resting-place of his tragedy—politic savings, and fetches of the breath—husbandry of the lungs, where nature pointed him to be an economist—rather, I think, than errors of the judgment. They were, at worst, less painful than the eternal tormenting unappeasable vigilance,—the "lidless dragon eyes," of present fashionable tragedy.

[The story of his swallowing opium pills to keep him lively on the first night of a certain tragedy, we may presume to be a piece of retaliatory pleasantry on the part of the suffering author; but, indeed, John had the art of diffusing a complacent equable dullness (which you knew not where to quarrel with), over a piece which he did not like, beyond any of his contemporaries. John Kemble had made up his mind early, that all the good tragedies which could be written, had been written; and he resented any new attempt. His shelves were full. The old standards were scope enough for his ambition. He ranged in them absolutely—and fair "in Otway, full in Shakespeare shone." He succeeded to the old lawful thrones, and did not care to adventure bottomry with a Sir Edward Mortimer or any casual speculator that offered. I remember, too actually for my peace, the deadly extinguisher which he put upon my friend G.'s "Antonio." G., satiate with visions of political justice (possibly not to be realized in our time), or willing to let the sceptical worldlings see that his anticipations of the future did not preclude a warm sympathy for men as they are and have been—wrote a tragedy. He chose a story, affecting, romantic, Spanish—the plot simple, without being naked—the incidents uncommon, without being overstrained. Antonio, who gives the name to the piece, is a sensitive young Castilian, who, in a fit of his country honour, immolates his sister—

But I must not anticipate the catastrophe—the play, reader, is extant in

choice English—and you will employ a spare half-crown not injudiciously in the quest of it.

The conception was bold, and the *dénoument*—the time and place in which the hero of it existed, considered—not much out of keeping; yet it must be confessed, that it required a delicacy of handling both from the author and the performer, so as not much to shock the prejudices of a modern English audience. G., in my opinion, had done his part.

John, who was in familiar habits with the philosopher, had undertaken to play Antonio. Great expectations were formed. A philosopher's first play was a new era. The night arrived. I was favoured with a seat in an advantageous box, between the author and his friend M——. G. sat cheerful and confident. In his friend M.'s looks, who had perused the manuscript, I read some terror. Antonio, in the person of John Philip Kemble, at length appeared, starched out in a ruff which no one could dispute, and in most irreproachable mustachios. John always dressed most provokingly correct on these occasions. The first act swept by, solemn and silent. It went off, as G. assured M., exactly as the opening act of a piece—the protasis—should do. The cue of the spectators was, to be mute. The characters were but in their introduction. The passions and the incidents would be developed hereafter. Applause hitherto would be impertinent. Silent attention was the effect all-desirable. Poor M. acquiesced—but in his honest, friendly face I could discern a working which told how much more acceptable the plaudit of a single hand (however misplaced) would have been than all this reasoning. The second act (as in duty bound) rose a little in interest, but still John kept his forces under—in policy, as G. would have it—and the audience were most complacently attentive. The protasis, in fact, was scarcely unfolded. The interest would warm in the next act, against which a special incident was provided. M. wiped his cheek, flushed with a friendly perspiration—'tis M.'s way of showing his zeal—"from every pore of him a perfume falls'—I honour it above Alexander's. He had once or twice during this act joined his palms, in a feeble endeavour to elicit a sound—they emitted a solitary noise, without an echo—there was no deep to answer to his deep. G. repeatedly begged him to be quiet. The third act at length brought him on the scene which was to warm the piece, progressively, to the final flaming forth of the catastrophe. A philosophic calm settled upon the clear brow of G., as it approached. The lips of M. quivered. A challenge was held forth upon the stage, and there was a promise of a fight. The pit roused themselves on this extraordinary occasion, and, as their manner is, seemed disposed to make a ring,—when suddenly, Antonio, who was the challenged, turning the tables upon the hot challenger, Don Gusman (who, by the way, should have had his sister) baulks his humour, and the pit's reasonable expectation at the same time, with some speeches out of the "New Philosophy against Duelling." The audience were here fairly caught—their courage was up, and on the alert—a few blows, *ding-dong*, as R—s, the dramatist, afterwards expressed it to me, might have done the business, when their most exquisite moral sense was suddenly called in to assist in the mortifying negation of their own pleasure. They could not applaud for disappointment; they would not condemn for morality's sake. The interest stood stone still; and John's manner was not calculated to unpetrify it. It was Christmas time, and the atmosphere furnished some pretext for asthmatic affections. One began to cough—his neighbour sympathized with him—till a cough became epidemical. But when, from being half artificial in the pit, the cough got frightfully naturalized among the fictitious persons of the drama, and Antonio himself (albeit it was not set down in the stage directions) seemed more intent upon relieving his own lungs than the distresses of the author and his friends, then G. "first knew fear;" and, mildly turning to M., intimated that he had not been aware that Mr. K. laboured under a

cold; and that the performance might possibly have been postponed with advantage for some nights farther—still keeping the same serene countenance, while M. sweat like a bull. It would be invidious to pursue the fates of this ill-starred evening. In vain did the plot thicken in the scenes that followed; in vain did the dialogue wax more passionate and stirring, and the progress of the sentiment point more and more clearly to the arduous development which impended. In vain the action was accelerated, while the acting stood still. From the beginning John had taken his stand; had wound himself up to an even tenor of stately declamation, from which no exigence of dialogue or person could make him swerve for an instant. To dream of his rising with the scene (the common trick of tragedians) was preposterous; for, from the onset, he had planted himself, as upon a terrace, on an eminence vastly above the audience, and he kept that sublime level to the end. He looked from his throne of elevated sentiment upon the under-world of spectators with a most sovereign and becoming contempt. There was excellent pathos delivered out to them: an they would receive it, so; an they would not receive it, so; there was no offence against decorum in all this; nothing to condemn, to damn. Not an irreverent symptom of a sound was to be heard. The procession of verbiage stalked on through four and five acts, no one venturing to predict what would come of it, when towards the winding up of the latter, Antonio, with an irrelevancy that seemed to stagger Elvira herself—for she had been coolly arguing the point of honour with him—suddenly whips out a poniard, and stabs her sister to the heart. The effect was as if a murder had been committed in cold blood. The whole house rose up in clamorous indignation, demanding justice. The feeling rose far above hisses. I believe at that instant, if they could have got him, they would have torn the unfortunate author to pieces. Not that the act itself was so exorbitant, or of a complexion different from what they themselves would have applauded upon another occasion, in a Brutus or an Appius, but for want of attending to Antonio's *words*, which palpably led to the expectation of no less dire event, instead of being seduced by his *manner*, which seemed to promise a sleep of less alarming nature than it was his cue to inflict upon Elvira: they found themselves betrayed into an accompliceship of murder, a perfect misprision of parricide, while they dreamed of nothing less. M., I believe, was the only person who suffered acutely from the failure; for G. thenceforward, with a serenity unattainable but by the true philosophy, abandoning a precarious popularity, retired into his fasthold of speculation,—the drama in which the world was to be his tiring-room, and remote posterity his applauding spectators at once and actors.]

# The Praise of Chimney Sweepers.

(*The London Magazine*, May, 1822).

[As originally printed, this charming essay had prefixed to it as a sub-title "A May Day Effusion." The hero of it, James White, or more familiarly Jem White, was the "J. W." already referred to by Elia towards the close of his paper on "Distant Correspondents." His one literary effusion, the supposititious "Letters of Sir John Falstaff," already named in the note prefixed to that essay, Charles Lamb, for the sake of the quaint old-fashioned humour scattered through its pages, regarded with the highest

admiration. James White, here spoken of "as extinct," died in 1821, as nearly as possible a twelvemonth before this celebration of his hospitality to the poor chimney sweepers.]

I LIKE to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek—such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning towards these dim specks—poor blots—innocent blacknesses—

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth—these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger that one's-self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni*—to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades!—to shudder with the idea that "now, surely, he must be lost for ever!"—to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight—and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly; not much unlike the old stage direction in Macbeth, where the "Apparation of child crowned with a tree in his hand rises."

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

There is a composition, the groundwork of which I have understood to be the sweet wood yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this "wholesome and pleasant beverage, on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street—*the only Salopian house*,—I have never yet adventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients—a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper—whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive—but so it is, that no possible taste or odour to the

senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense, if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals—cats—when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house*; yet be it known to thee, reader—if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art happily ignorant of the fact—he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savoury mess to humbler customers, at the dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labours of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honours of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odours. The rake who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapours in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop*—the precocious herb-woman's darling—the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas—the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldest thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny)—so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'ercharged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin—so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredienced soups—nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough—yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened—when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth——but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pie-man——there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever—with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth—for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it—that I could have been content, if the honour of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to "air" them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true

sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

> A sable cloud
> Turn, forth her silver lining on the night.

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility:—and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguisement, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticements of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless *defiliations.*

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur)—encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius—was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noon-day, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle.—But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions—is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was now but creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*, and resting-place. By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE was so impressed with a belief of métamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed,

who, relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quoited out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clamouring and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table—for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings—how he would fit the tit bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating"—how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts—"The King,"—the "Cloth,"—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering;—and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, "May the Brush supersede the Laurel." All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

> Golden lads and lasses must,
> As chimney-sweepers, come to dust—

JAMES WHITE is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.

# A Complaint of the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis.

(*The London Magazine*, June, 1822.)

[The metrical translation by Charles Lamb, of Vincent Bourne's *Epitaphium in Canem*, having been already given (*supra*, p. 72), as a matter of course, is not here repeated. It first saw the light, however, as an integral portion of this essay in which it followed immediately upon the original.]

THE all-sweeping besom of societarian reformation—your only modern Alcides' club to rid the time of its abuses—is uplift with many-handed sway to extirpate the last fluttering tatters of the bugbear MENDICITY from the metropolis. Scrips, wallets, bags—staves, dogs, and crutches—the whole mendicant fraternity with all their baggage, are fast posting out of the purlieux of this eleventh persecution. From the crowded crossing, from the corners of streets and turnings of alleys, the parting Genius of Beggary is "with sighing sent."

I do not approve of this wholesale going to work, this impertinent crusado, or *bellum ad exterminationem*, proclaimed against a species. Much good might be sucked from these Beggars.

They were the oldest and the honourablest form of pauperism. Their appeals were to our common nature; less revolting to an ingenuous mind than to be a suppliant to the particular humours or caprice of any fellow-creature, or set of fellow-creatures, parochial or societarian. Theirs were the only rates uninvidious in the levy, ungrudged in the assessment.

There was a dignity springing from the very depth of their desolation; as to be naked is to be so much nearer to the being a man, than to go in livery.

The greatest spirits have felt this in their reverses; and when Dionysius from king turned schoolmaster, do we feel anything towards him but contempt? Could Vandyke have made a picture of him, swaying a ferula for a sceptre, which would have affected our minds with the same heroic pity, the same compassionate admiration, with which we regard his Belisarius begging for an *obolum?* Would the moral have been more graceful, more pathetic?

The Blind Beggar in the legend—the father of pretty Bessy—whose story doggerel rhymes and ale-house signs cannot so degrade or attenuate, but that some sparks or a lustrous spirit will shine through the disguisements—this noble earl of Cornwall (as indeed he was) and memorable sport of fortune, fleeing from the unjust sentence of his liege lord, stript of all, and seated on the flowering green at Bethnal, with his more fresh and springing daughter by his side, illumining his rags and his beggary—would the child and parent have cut a better figure, doing the honours of a counter, or expiating their fallen condition upon the three-foot eminence of some sempstering shop-board?

In tale or history your Beggar is ever the just antipode to your King. The poets and romancical writers (as dear Margaret Newcastle would call them)

when they would most sharply and feelingly paint a reverse of fortune, never stop till they have brought down their hero in good earnest to rags and the wallet. The depth of the descent illustrates the height he falls from. There is no medium which can be presented to the imagination without offence. There is no breaking the fall. Lear, thrown from his palace, must divest him of his garments, till he answer "mere nature;" and Cresseid, fallen from a prince's love, must extend her pale alms, pale with other whiteness than of beauty, supplicating lazar arms with bell and clap-dish.

The Lucian wits knew this very well; and, with a converse policy, when they would express scorn of greatness without the pity, they show us an Alexander in the shades cobbling shoes, or a Semiramis getting up foul linen.

How would it sound in song, that a great monarch had declined his affections upon the daughter of a baker! yet do we feel the imagination at all violated when we read the "true ballad," where King Cophetua woos the beggar-maid?

Pauperism, pauper, poor man, are expressions of pity, but pity alloyed with contempt. No one properly contemns a beggar. Poverty is a comparative thing, and each degree of it is mocked by its "neighbour grice."* Its poor rents and comings-in are soon summed up and told. Its pretences to property are almost ludicrous. Its pitiful attempts to save excite a smile. Every scornful companion can weigh his trifle-bigger purse against it. Poor man reproaches poor man in the streets with impolitic mention of his condition, his own being a shade better, while the rich pass by and jeer at both. No rascally comparative insults a Beggar, or thinks of weighing purses with him. He is not in the scale of comparison. He is not under the measure of property. He confessedly hath none, any more than a dog or a sheep. No one twitteth him with ostentation above his means. No one accuses him of pride, or upbraideth him with mock humility. None jostle with him for the wall, or pick quarrels for precedency. No wealthy neighbour seeketh to eject him from his tenement. No man sues him. No man goes to law with him. If I were not the independent gentleman that I am, rather than I would be a retainer to the great, a led captain, or a poor relation, I would choose, out of the delicacy and true greatness of my mind, to be a beggar.

Rags, which are the reproach of poverty, are the Beggar's robes, and graceful *insignia* of his profession, his tenure, his full dress, the suit in which he is expected to show himself in public. He is never out of the fashion, or limpeth awkwardly behind it. He is not required to put on court mourning. He weareth all colours, fearing none. His costume hath undergone less change than the Quaker's. He is the only man in the universe who is not obliged to study appearances. The ups and downs of the world concern him no longer. He alone continueth in one stay. The price of stock or land affecteth him not. The fluctuations of agricultural or commercial prosperity touch him not, or at worst but change his customers. He is not expected to become bail or surety for any one. No man troubleth him with questioning his religion or politics. He is the only free man in the universe.

The Mendicants of this great city were so many of her sights, her lions. I can no more spare them than I could the Cries of London. No corner of a street is complete without them. They are as indispensable as the Ballad Singer; and in their picturesque attire as ornamental as the Signs of Old London. They were the standing morals, emblems, mementoes, dial-mottoes, the spital sermons, the books for children, the salutary checks and pauses to the high and rushing tide of greasy citizenry—

——— Look
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there.

* [Timon of Athens.]

Above all, those old blind Tobits that used to line the wall of Lincoln's Inn Garden, before modern fastidiousness had expelled them, casting up their ruined orbs to catch a ray of pity, and (if possible) of light, with their faithful dog-guide at their feet,—whither are they fled? or into what corners, blind as themselves, have they been driven, out of the wholesome air and sunwarmth? immured between four walls, in what withering poor-house do they endure the penalty of double darkness, where the chink of the dropt halfpenny no more consoles their forlorn bereavement, far from the sound of the cheerful and hope-stirring tread of the passenger? Where hang their useless staves? and who will farm their dogs?—Have the overseers of St. L—— caused them to be shot? or were they tied up in sacks, and dropt into the Thames, at the suggestion of B——, the mild Rector of ——?

Well fare the soul of unfastidious Vincent Bourne, most classical, and at the same time, most English, of the Latinists!—who has treated of this human and quadrupedal alliance, this dog and man friendship, in the sweetest of his poems, the *Epitaphium in Canem*, or, *Dog's Epitaph*. Reader, peruse it; and say, if customary sights, which could call up such gentle poetry as this, were of a nature to do more harm or good to the moral sence of the passengers through the daily thoroughfares of a vast and busy metropolis.

Pauperis hic Iri requiesco Lyciscus herilis,
Dum vixi, tutela vigil columenque senectæ,
Dux cæco fidus: nec, me ducente, solebat,
Prætenso hinc atque hinc baculo, per iniqua locorum
Incertam explorare viam; sed fila secutus,
Quæ dubios regerent passûs, vestigua tuta
Fixit inoffenso gressu; gelidumque sedile
In nudo nactus saxo, quâ prætereuntium
Unda frequens confluxit, ibi miserisque tenebras
Lamentis, noctemque oculis ploravit obortam.
Ploravit nec frustra; obolum dedit alter et alter,
Queis corda et mentem indiderat natura benignam.
Ad latus interea jacui sopitus herile,
Vel mediis vigil in somnis; ad herilia jussa
Auresque atque animum arrectus, seu frustula amicè
Porrexit sociasque dapes, sue longa diei
Tædia perpessus, reditum sub nocte parabat,
Hi mores, hæc vita fuit, dum fata sinebant,
Dum neque languebam morbis, nec inerte senectâ;
Quæ tandem obrepsit, veterique satellite cæcum
Orbavit dominum: prisci sed gratia facti
Ne tota intereat, longos delecta per annos,
Exiguum hunc Irus tumulum de cespite fecit,
Etsi inopis, non ingratæ, munuscula dextræ;
Carmine signavitque brevi, dominumque canemque
Quod memoret, fidumque canem dominumque benignum.

These dim eyes have in vain explored for some months past a well-known figure, or part of the figure, of a man, who used to glide his comely upper half over the pavements of London, wheeling along with most ingenious celerity upon a machine of wood; a spectacle to natives, to foreigners, and to children. He was of a robust make, with a florid sailor-like complexion, and his head was bare to the storm and sunshine. He was a natural curiosity. a speculation to the scientific, a prodigy to the simple. The infant would stare at the mighty man brought down to his own level. The common cripple would despise his own pusillanimity, viewing the hale stoutness, and hearty heart, of this half-limbed giant. Few but must have noticed him; for the accident, which brought him low, took place during the riots of 1780, and he has been a groundling so long. He seemed earth-born, an Antæus, and to suck in fresh vigour from the soil which he neighboured.

He was a grand fragment; as good as an Elgin marble. The nature which should have recruited his reft legs and thighs, was not lost, but only retired into his upper parts, and he was half a Hercules. I heard a tremendous voice thundering and growling, as before an earthquake, and casting down my eyes, it was this mandrake reviling a steed that had started at his portentous appearance. He seemed to want but his just stature to have rent the offending quadruped in shivers. He was as the man-part of a Centaur, from which the horse-half had been cloven in some dire Lapithan controversy. He moved on as if he could have made shift with yet half of the body-portion which was left him. The *os sublime* was not wanting; and he threw out yet a jolly countenance upon the heavens. Forty-and-two years had he driven this out-of-door trade, and now that his hair is grizzled in the service, but his good spirits no way impaired, because he is not content to exchange his free air and exercise for the restraints of a poor-house, he is expiating his contumacy in one of those houses (ironically christened) of Correction.

Was a daily spectacle like this to be deemed a nuisance, which called for legal interference to remove? or not rather a salutary and a touching object, to the passers-by in a great city? Among her shows, her museums, and supplies for ever-gaping curiosity (and what else but an accumulation of sights—endless sights—*is* a great city; or for what else is it desirable?) was there not room for one *Lusus* (not *Naturæ*, indeed, but) *Accidentium?* What if in forty-and-two years' going about, the man had scraped together enough to give a portion to his child (as the rumour ran) of a few hundreds—whom had he injured?—whom had he imposed upon? The contributors had enjoyed their *sight* for their pennies. What if after being exposed all day to the heats, the rains, and the frosts of heaven—shuffling his ungainly trunk along in an elaborate and painful motion—he was enabled to retire at night to enjoy himself at a club of his fellow-cripples over a dish of hot meat and vegetables, as the charge was gravely brought against him by a clergyman deposing before a House of Commons' Committee—was *this*, or was his truly paternal consideration, which (if a fact) deserved a statue rather than a whipping-post, and is inconsistent at least with the exaggeration of nocturnal orgies which he has been slandered with—a reason that he should be deprived of his chosen, harmless, nay edifying, way of life, and be committed in hoary age for a sturdy vagabond?—

There was a Yorick once, whom it would not have shamed to have sate down at the cripples' feast, and to have thrown in his benediction, ay, and his mite too, for a companionable symbol. "Age, thou hast lost thy breed!"—

Half of these stories about the prodigious fortunes made by begging are (I verily believe) misers' calumnies. One was much talked of in the public papers some time since, and the usual charitable inferences deduced. A clerk in the Bank was surprised with the announcement of a five hundred pound legacy left him by a person whose name he was a stranger to. It seems that in his daily morning walks from Peckham (or some village thereabouts) where he lived, to his office, it had been his practice for the last twenty years to drop his halfpenny duly into the hat of some blind Bartimeus, that sate begging alms by the way-side in the Borough. The good old beggar recognized his daily benefactor by the voice only; and, when he died, left all the amassings of his alms (that had been half a century perhaps in the accumulating) to his old Bank friend. Was this a story to purse up people's hearts, and pennies, against giving an alms to the blind?—or not rather a beautiful moral of well-directed charity on the one part, and noble gratitude upon the other?

I sometimes wish I had been that Bank clerk.

I seem to remember a poor old grateful kind of creature, blinking, and looking up with his no eyes in the sun—

Is it possible I could have steeled my purse against him?

Perhaps I had no small change.

Reader, do not be frightened at the hard words, imposition, imposture—*give, and ask no questions.* Cast thy bread upon the waters. Some have unawares (like this Bank clerk) entertained angels.

Shut not thy purse-strings always against painted distress. Act a charity sometimes. When a poor creature (outwardly and visibly such) comes before thee, do not stay to inquire whether the "seven small children," in whose name he implores thy assistance, have a veritable existence. Rake not into the bowels of unwelcome truth, to save a halfpenny. It is good to believe him. If he be not all that he pretendeth, *give*, and under a personate father of a family, think (if thou pleasest) that thou hast relieved an indigent bachelor. When they come with their counterfeit looks, and mumping tones, think them players. You pay your money to see a comedian feign these things, which, concerning these poor people, thou canst not certainly tell whether they are feigned or not.

["Pray God, your honour, relieve me," said a poor beadswoman to my friend L—— one day: "I have seen better days." "So have I, my good woman," retorted he, looking up at the welkin, which was just then threatening a storm—and the jest (he will have) was as good to the beggar as a tester. It was, at all events, kinder than consigning her to the stocks, or the parish beadle.—

But L. has a way of viewing things in rather a paradoxical light on some occasions.

P.S.—My friend Hume (not M.P.) has a curious manuscript in his possession, the original draft of the celebrated "Beggar's Petition" (who cannot say by heart the "Beggar's Petition?"), as it was written by some school usher (as I remember), with corrections interlined from the pen of Oliver Goldsmith. As a specimen of the Doctor's improvement, I recollect one most judicious alteration—

> "A pamper'd menial drove me from the door."

It stood originally—

> "A livery servant drove me," &c.

Here is an instance of poetical or artificial language properly substituted for the phrase of common conversation; against Wordsworth, I think I must get H. to send it to the *London*, as a corollary to the foregoing.]

# A Dissertation upon Roast Pig.

(*The London Magazine*, September, 1822.)

[According to Charles Lamb's own acknowledgment, he was indebted for the root-idea of this delicious morsel of drollery to his old associate, Thomas Manning, who had passed many years of his life as a resident among the Chinese. Mr. Carew Hazlitt has, however, very clearly demonstrated, in what he modestly calls his book of "gleanings after the gleaners" (p. 258), that it was not a Chinese manuscript at all that was read and explained to Elia by his friend Manning, but something quite "as good as Chinese" to

Charles Lamb, to wit a printed quarto poem in Italian (of which he understood little or nothing), written in the *terza rima*, by Tigrinio Bistonio, and published in 1761 at Modena, the theme of the book being "The Praises of the Pig," as its title plainly intimated: "*Gli Elogi del Porco Capitoli Berneschi, di Tigrinio Bistonio.*"]

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his Mundane Mutations, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Cho-fang, literally the Cook's holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as younkers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in the utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labour of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?—not from the burnt cottage—he had smelt that smell before—indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—*crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the new-born pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hail-stones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued:

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there, I say?"

"O father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste,—O Lord,"—with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavour, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbours would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given,—to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present—without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision; and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the districts. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind.——

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favour of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it to be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum*.

I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—those hobbydehoys—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunditiæ*, the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble, and a grumble—the mild forerunner, or *præludium*, of a grunt.

*He must be roasted.* I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled—but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavour comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—O call it not fat—but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food——the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna,—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is doing—it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string!—Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars—

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth!—wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal—wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation—from these sins he is happily snatched away—

> Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
> Death came with timely care—

his memory is odoriferous—no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon—no coalheaver bolteth him in reeking sausages—he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of sapors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent—a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause—too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her—like lovers' kisses, she biteth—she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish—but she stoppeth at the palate—she meddleth not with the appetite—and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig—let me speak his praise—is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwisted, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is—good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbours' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear

Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavours, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightingly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate—It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy-like, I made him a present of—the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I—I myself, and not another—would eat her nice cake—and what should I say to her the next time I saw her—how naughty I was to part with her pretty present—and the odour of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last—and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old gray impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto—

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are—but consider, he is a weakling—a flower.

# A RECANTATION.

## UNDER THE TITLE OF "THOUGHTS ON GAME, &c."

(*The Athenæum, 30th November,* 1833.)

[The subjoined paper is interpolated here among the Elian Essays as a distinct pendant to the immortal "Dissertation upon Roast Pig." As conveying a gravely humorous repudiation by Elia of his earlier *penchant* for the luscious crackling and the animal manna underneath, it may be regarded as not unworthy, by reason of many inimitable touches scattered through it, of being brought into formidable comparison with that succulent masterpiece. The narrow proof-slip of this slight but dainty contribution to the *Athenæum*—sown all down the margin with minute emendations and erasures in Charles Lamb's handwriting—has, with many other choice original papers of Lamb's, been placed at the command of the editor of this Popular Centenary Edition by the kindness of Sir Charles Dilke, into whose hands, with a mass of similar treasure, they have passed through direct inheritance. From among these manuscripts, one of the very choicest of them all is here selected for the purpose of being given upon the opposite page in facsimile. It is surely the epicure's bit, the tenderest slice, the loveliest *morceau* carved from above the spinal cord of this delicately roasted hare—one that its numerous appreciators (for this surely is the Hare with Many Friends), will learn while devouring it, eats so "crips" according to the apt phrase of that delightful Mrs. Minikin.]

"We love to have our friend in the country sitting thus at our table *by proxy;* to apprehend his presence (though a hundred miles may be between us) by a turkey, whose goodly aspect reflects to us his 'plump corpusculum;' to taste him in grouse or woodcock; to feel him gliding down in the toast peculiar to the latter; to concorporate him in a slice of Canterbury brawn. This is indeed to have him within ourselves; to know him intimately; such participation is methinks *unitive*, as the old theologians phrase it."—Last Essays of Elia.

Elia presents his acknowledgments to his "Correspondent unknown," for a basket of prodigiously fine game. He takes for granted that so amiable a character must be a reader of the *Athenæum*. Else he had meditated a notice in the *Times*. Now if this friend had consulted the Delphic oracle for a present suited to the palate of Elia, he could not have hit upon a morsel so acceptable. The birds he is barely thankful for; pheasants are poor *fowls* disguised in fine feathers. But a hare roasted hard and brown—with gravy and melted butter!—old Mr. Chambers, the sensible clergyman in Warwickshire, whose son's acquaintance has made many hours happy in the life of Elia, used to allow a pound of Epping to every hare. Perhaps that was overdoing it. But, in spite of the note of Philomel, who, like some fine poets, that think no scorn to adopt plagiarisms from a humble brother, reiterates every spring her cuckoo cry of "Jug, Jug, Jug," Elia pronounces that a hare, to be truly palated, must be roasted. Jugging sophisticates her. In *our* way it eats so "crips," as Mrs. Minikin says. Time was, when Elia was not arrived at his taste, that he preferred to all a roasted Pig. But he disclaims all such green-sickness appetites in future, though he hath to acknowledge the receipt of many a delicacy in that kind from correspondents—good, but mistaken men,—

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Pray, let the middle part of it come out thus from the press — "But in spite of the note of Philomel, who, like some fine poets, that think no scorn to adopt plagiarisms from a humble brother, reiterates every spring her cuckow cry of "Jug, Jug, Jug", Elia pronounces that a hare, to be truly palated, must be roasted. In our way it eats so "crips", as Mrs Minikin says. Time was, when Elia was not arrived at his taste, that he preferred to all luxuries a roasted Pig. But he disclaims all such green-sickness appetites in future, though he hath to acknowledge the receipt of many a delicacy in that kind from correspondents — good, but mistaken men — in consequence of their erroneous &c =

in consequence of their erroneous supposition, that he had carried up into mature life the prepossessions of childhood. From the worthy Vicar of Enfield he acknowledges a tithe contribution of extraordinary sapor. The ancients must have loved hares. Else why adopt word *lepores* (obviously from *lepus*) but for some subtle analogy between the delicate flavour of the latter, and the finer relishes of wit in what we must poorly translate *pleasantries*. The fine madnesses of the poet are the very decoction of his diet. Thence is he harebrained. Harum-scarum is a libellous unfounded phrase of modern usage. 'Tis true the hare is the most circumspect of animals, sleeping with her eye open. Her ears, ever erect, keep them in that wholesome exercise, which conduces them to form the very tit-bit of the admirers of this noble animal. Noble will I call her, in spite of her detractors, who from occasional demonstrations of the principle of self-preservation (common to all animals) infer in her a defect of heroism. Half a hundred horsemen, with thrice the number of dogs, scour the country in pursuit of puss across three counties; and because the well-flavoured beast, weighing the odds, is willing to evade the hue-and-cry, with her delicate ears shrinking perchance from discord—comes the grave Naturalist, Linnæus perchance or Buffon, and gravely sets down the Hare as a—timid animal. Why, Achilles or Bully Dawson would have declined the preposterous combat.

In fact, how light of digestion we feel after a hare! How tender its processes after swallowing! What chyle it promotes! How ethereal! as if its living celerity were a type of its nimble coursing through the animal juices. The notice might be longer. It is intended less as a Natural History of the Hare, than a cursory thanks to the country "good Unknown." The hare has many friends, but none sincerer than

ELIA.

# A Bachelor's Complaint

## OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF MARRIED PEOPLE.

(*The London Magazine*, September, 1822.)

[This paper, eleven years prior to its reissue as one of the Elian essays in the *London*, appeared (in 1811) in No. 4 of Leigh Hunt's *Reflector*. Upon the occasion of its republication in the Magazine it was subscribed "your humble servant Elia."]

As a single man, I have spent a good deal of my time in noting down the infirmities of Married People, to console myself for those superior pleasures, which they tell me I have lost by remaining as I am.

I cannot say that the quarrels of men and their wives ever made any great impression upon me, or had much tendency to strengthen me in those anti-social resolutions, which I took up long ago upon more substantial considerations. What oftenest offends me at the houses of married persons where I visit, is an error of quite a different description;—it is that they are too loving.

Not too loving neither: that does not explain my meaning. Besides, why should that offend me? The very act of separating themselves from the rest of

the world, to have the fuller enjoyment of each other's society, implies that they prefer one another to all the world.

But what I complain of is, that they carry this preference so undisguisedly, they perk it up in the faces of us single people so shamelessly, you cannot be in their company a moment without being made to feel, by some indirect hint or open avowal, that *you* are not the object of this preference. Now there are some things which give no offence, while implied or taken for granted merely; but expressed, there is much offence in them. If a man were to accost the first homely-featured or plain-dressed young woman of his acquaintance, and tell her bluntly, that she was not handsome or rich enough for him, and he could not marry her, he would deserve to be kicked for his ill manners; yet no less is implied in the fact, that having access and opportunity of putting the question to her, he has never yet thought fit to do it. The young woman understands this as clearly as if it were put into words; but no reasonable young woman would think of making this the ground of a quarrel. Just as little right have a married couple to tell me by speeches, and looks that are scarce less plain than speeches, that I am not the happy man,—the lady's choice. It is enough that I know I am not; I do not want this perpetual reminding.

The display of superior knowledge or riches may be made sufficiently mortifying; but these admit of a palliative. The knowledge which is brought out to insult me, may accidentally improve me; and in the rich man's houses and pictures,—his parks and gardens, I have a temporary usufruct at least. But the display of married happiness has none of these palliatives; it is throughout pure, unrecompensed, unqualified insult.

Marriage by its best title is a monopoly, and not of the least invidious sort. It is the cunning of most possessors of any exclusive privilege to keep their advantage as much out of sight as possible, that their less favoured neighbours, seeing little of the benefit, may the less be disposed to question the right. But these married monopolists thrust the most obnoxious part of their patent into our faces.

Nothing is to me more distasteful than that entire complacency and satisfaction which beam in the countenances of a new-married couple,—in that of the lady particularly: it tells you, that her lot is disposed of in this world; that *you* can have no hopes of her. It is true, I have none; nor wishes either, perhaps: but this is one of those truths which ought, as I said before, to be taken for granted, not expressed.

The excessive airs which those people give themselves, founded on the ignorance of us unmarried people, would be more offensive if they were less irrational. We will allow them to understand the mysteries belonging to their own craft better than we who have not had the happiness to be made free of the company: but their arrogance is not content within these limits. If a single person presume to offer his opinion in their presence, though upon the most indifferent subject, he is immediately silenced as an incompetent person. Nay, a young married lady of my acquaintance, who, the best of the jest was, had not changed her condition above a fortnight before, in a question on which I had the misfortune to differ from her, respecting the properest mode of breeding oysters for the London market, had the assurance to ask, with a sneer, how such an old Bachelor as I could pretend to know any thing about such matters.

But what I have spoken of hitherto is nothing to the airs which these creatures give themselves when they come, as they generally do, to have children. When I consider how little of a rarity children are,—that every street and blind alley swarms with them,—that the poorest people commonly have them in most abundance,—that there are few marriages that are not blest with at least one of these bargains,—how often they turn out ill, and defeat the fond hopes

of their parents, taking to vicious courses, which end in poverty, disgrace, the gallows, &c.—I cannot for my life tell what cause for pride there can possibly be in having them. If they were young phœnixes, indeed, that were born but one in a year, there might be a pretext. But when they are so common——

I do not advert to the insolent merit which they assume with their husbands on these occasions. Let them look to that. But why *we*, who are not their natural-born subjects, should be expected to bring our spices, myrrh, and incense,—our tribute and homage of admiration,—I do not see.

"Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children:" so says the excellent office in our Prayer-book appointed for the churching of women. "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them:" so say I; but then don't let him discharge his quiver upon us that are weaponless;—let them be arrows, but not to gall and stick us. I have generally observed that these arrows are double-headed: they have two forks, to be sure to hit with one or the other. As for instance, where you come into a house which is full of children, if you happen to take no notice of them (you are thinking of something else, perhaps, and turn a deaf ear to their innocent caresses), you are set down as untractable, morose, a hater of children. On the other hand, if you find them more than usually engaging,—if you are taken with their pretty manners, and set about in earnest to romp and play with them, some pretext or other is sure to be found for sending them out of the room: they are too noisy or boisterous, or Mr. —— does not like children. With one or other of these forks the arrow is sure to hit you.

I could forgive their jealousy, and dispense with toying with their brats, if it gives them pain; but I think it unreasonable to be called upon to *love* them, where I see no occasion,—to love a whole family, perhaps, eight, nine, or ten, indiscriminately,—to love all the pretty dears, because children are so engaging.

I know there is a proverb, "Love me, love my dog;" that is not always so very practicable, particularly if the dog be set upon you to tease you or snap at you in sport. But a dog, or a lesser thing,—any inanimate substance, as a keepsake, a watch or a ring, a tree, or the place where we last parted when my friend went away upon a long absence, I can make shift to love, because I love him, and anything that reminds me of him; provided it be in its nature indifferent, and apt to receive whatever hue fancy can give it. But children have a real character and essential being of themselves: they are amiable or unamiable *per se;* I must love or hate them as I see cause for either in their qualities. A child's nature is too serious a thing to admit of its being regarded as a mere appendage to another being, and to be loved or hated accordingly: they stand with me upon their own stock, as much as men and women do. O! but you will say, sure it is an attractive age,—there is something in the tender years of infancy that of itself charms us. That is the very reason why I am more nice about them. I know that a sweet child is the sweetest thing in nature, not even excepting the delicate creatures which bear them; but the prettier the kind of a thing is, the more desirable it is that it should be pretty of its kind. One daisy differs not much from another in glory; but a violet should look and smell the daintiest.—I was always rather squeamish in my women and children.

But this is not the worst: one must be admitted into their familiarity, at least, before they can complain of inattention. It implies visits, and some kind of intercourse. But if the husband be a man with whom you have lived on a friendly footing before marriage,—if you did not come in on the wife's side,—if you did not sneak into the house in her train, but were an old friend in fast habits of intimacy before their courtship was so much as thought on,—look

about you—your tenure is precarious—before a twelvemonth shall roll over your head, you shall find your old friend gradually grow cool and altered towards you, and at last seek opportunities of breaking with you. I have scarce a married friend of my acquaintance, upon whose firm faith I can rely, whose friendship did not commence *after the period of his marriage.* With some limitations they can endure that: but that the good man should have dared to enter into a solemn league of friendship in which they were not consulted, though it happened before they knew him,—before they that are now man and wife ever met,—this is intolerable to them. Every long friendship, every old authentic intimacy, must be brought into their office to be new stamped with their currency, as a sovereign Prince calls in the good old money that was coined in some reign before he was born or thought of, to be new marked and minted with the stamp of his authority, before he will let it pass current in the world. You may guess what luck generally befalls such a rusty piece of metal as I am in these *new mintings.*

Innumerable are the ways which they take to insult and worm you out of their husband's confidence. Laughing at all you say with a kind of wonder, as if you were a queer kind of fellow that said good things, *but an oddity*, is one of the ways;—they have a particular kind of stare for the purpose;—till at last the husband, who used to defer to your judgment, and would pass over some excrescences of understanding and manner for the sake of a general vein of observation (not quite vulgar) which he perceived in you, begins to suspect whether you are not altogether a humourist,—a fellow well enough to have consorted with in his bachelor days, but not quite so proper to be introduced to ladies. This may be called the staring way; and is that which has oftenest been put in practice against me.

Then there is the exaggerating way, or the way of irony: that is, where they find you an object of especial regard with their husband, who is not so easily to be shaken from the lasting attachment founded on esteem which he has conceived towards you; by never-qualified exaggerations to cry up all that you say or do, till the good man, who understands well enough that it is all done in compliment to him, grows weary of the debt of gratitude which is due to so much candour, and by relaxing a little on his part, and taking down a peg or two in his enthusiasm, sinks at length to that kindly level of moderate esteem,—that "decent affection and complacent kindness" towards you, where she herself can join in sympathy with him without much stretch and violence to her sincerity.

Another way (for the ways they have to accomplish so desirable a purpose are infinite) is, with a kind of innocent simplicity, continually to mistake what it was which first made their husband fond of you. If an esteem for something excellent in your moral character was that which riveted the chain which she is to break, upon any imaginary discovery of a want of poignancy in your conversation, she will cry, "I thought, my dear, you described your friend, Mr. ——, as a great wit." If, on the other hand, it was for some supposed charm in your conversation that he first grew to like you, and was content for this to overlook some trifling irregularities in your moral deportment, upon the first notice of any of these she as readily exclaims, "This, my dear, is your good Mr. ——." One good lady whom I took the liberty of expostulating with for not showing me quite so much respect as I thought due to her husband's old friend, had the candour to confess to me that she had often heard Mr. —— speak of me before marriage, and that she had conceived a great desire to be acquainted with me, but that the sight of me had very much disappointed her expectations; for from her husband's representations of me, she had formed a notion that she was to see a fine, tall, officer-like looking man (I use her very words); the very reverse of which proved to be the truth. This was candid; and I had the civility not to ask her in return, how she came to

pitch upon a standard of personal accomplishments for her husband's friends which differed so much from his own; for my friend's dimensions at near as possibly approximate to mine; he standing five feet five in his shoes, in which I have the advantage of him by about half an inch; and he no more than myself exhibiting any indications of a martial character in his air or countenance.

These are some of the mortifications which I have encountered in the absurd attempt to visit at their houses. To enumerate them all would be a vain endeavour: I shall therefore just glance at the very common impropriety of which married ladies are guilty,—of treating us as if we were their husbands, and *vice versâ*. I mean, when they use us with familiarity, and their husbands with ceremony. *Testacea*, for instance, kept me the other night two or three hours beyond my usual time of supping, while she was fretting because Mr. —— did not come home till the oysters were all spoiled, rather than she would be guilty of the impoliteness of touching one in his absence. This was reversing the point of good manners: for ceremony is an invention to take off the uneasy feeling which we derive from knowing ourselves to be less the object of love and esteem with a fellow-creature than some other person is. It endeavours to make up, by superior attentions in little points, for that invidious preference which it is forced to deny in the greater. Had *Testacea* kept the oysters back for me, and withstood her husband's importunities to go to supper, she would have acted according to the strict rules of propriety. I know no ceremony that ladies are bound to observe to their husbands, beyond the point of a modest behaviour and decorum: therefore I must protest against the vicarious gluttony of *Cerasia*, who at her own table sent away a dish of Morellas, which I was applying to with great good will, to her husband at the other end of the table, and recommended a plate of less extraordinary gooseberries to my unwedded palate in their stead. Neither can I excuse the wanton affront of ——.

But I am weary of stringing up all my married acquaintance by Roman denominations. Let them amend and change their manners, or I promise to record the full-length English of their names to the terror of all such desperate offenders in future.

# On the Acting of Munden.

(*The London Magazine*, October, 1822.)

[This was originally printed as a portion of the concluding instalment of Elia's three contributions to the *London Magazine*, under the general heading of "The Old Actors." Appended to it in this Popular Centenary Edition is a paper which is unmistakably Charles Lamb's, but which has never, until now, been identified as his, one in which he celebrated, upon the very morrow of Joseph Shepherd Munden's Farewell, the disappearance from the stage of that inimitable comedian. This reclaimed theatrical notice from the pen of Elia will be found in every way worthy of being placed thus in direct juxtaposition with what is, beyond all doubt, one of the choicest effusions of the Master Essayist. As completing these tributes to his favourite actor, Charles Lamb's obituary notice of Munden is immediately afterwards given from the pages of the *Athenæum*.]

Not many nights ago I had come home from seeing this extraordinary performer in Cockletop; and when I retired to my pillow, his whimsical image still stuck by me, in a manner as to threaten sleep. In vain I tried to divest myself of it, by conjuring up the most opposite associations. I resolved to be

serious. I raised up the gravest topics of life; private misery, public calamity. All would not do.

——There the antic sate
Mocking our state—

his queer visnomy—his bewildering costume—all the strange things which he had raked together—his serpentine rod, swagging about in his pocket—Cleopatra's tear, and the rest of his relics—O'Keefe's wild farce, and *his* wilder commentary—till the passion of laughter, like grief in excess, relieved itself by its own weight, inviting the sleep which in the first instance it had driven away.

But I was not to escape so easily. No sooner did I fall into slumbers, than the same image, only more perplexing, assailed me in the shape of dreams. Not one Munden, but five hundred, were dancing before me, like the faces which, whether you will or no, come when you have been taking opium—all the strange combinations, which this strangest of all strange mortals ever shot his proper countenance into, from the day he came commissioned to dry up the tears of the town for the loss of the now almost forgotten Edwin. O for the power of the pencil to have fixed them when I awoke! A season or two since there was exhibited a Hogarth gallery. I do not see why there should not be a Munden gallery. In richness and variety the latter would not fall far short of the former.

There is one face of Farley, one face of Knight, one (but what a one it is!) of Liston; but Munden has none that you can properly pin down, and call *his*. When you think he has exhausted his battery of looks, in unaccountable warfare with your gravity, suddenly he sprouts out an entirely new set of features, like Hydra. He is not one, but legion. Not so much a comedian, as a company. If his name could be multiplied like his countenance, it might fill a play-bill. He, and he alone, literally *makes faces:* applied to any other person, the phrase is a mere figure, denoting certain modifications of the human countenance. Out of some invisible wardrobe he dips for faces, as his friend Suett used for wigs, and fetches them out as easily. I should not be surprised to see him some day put out the head of a river horse; or come forth a pewit, or lapwing, some feathered metamorphosis.

I have seen this gifted actor in Sir Christopher Curry—in Old Dornton—diffuse a glow of sentiment which has made the pulse of a crowded theatre beat like that of one man; when he has come in aid of the pulpit, doing good to the moral heart of a people. I have seen some faint approaches to this sort of excellence in other players. But in the grand grotesque of farce, Munden stands out as single and unaccompanied as Hogarth. Hogarth, strange to tell, had no followers. The school of Munden began, and must end with himself.

Can any man *wonder*, like him? can any man *see ghosts*, like him? or *fight with his own shadow*—"SESSA"—as he does in that strangely-neglected thing, the *Cobbler of Preston*—where his alterations from the Cobbler to the Magnifico, and from the Magnifico to the Cobbler, keep the brain of the spectator in as wild a ferment, as if some Arabian Night were being acted before him. Who like him can throw, or ever attempted to throw, a preternatural interest over the commonest daily-life objects? A table, or a joint stool, in his conception, rises into a dignity equivalent to Cassiopeia's chair. It is invested with constellatory importance. You could not speak of it with more deference, if it were mounted into the firmament. A beggar in the hands of Michael Angelo, says Fuseli, rose the Patriarch of Poverty. So the gusto of Munden antiquates and ennobles what it touches. His pots and his ladles are as grand and primal as the seething-pots and hooks seen in old prophetic vision. A tub of butter, contemplated by him, amounts to a Platonic idea. He understands a leg of mutton in its quiddity. He stands wondering, amid the commonplace materials of life, like primeval man with the sun and stars about him.

# MUNDEN'S FAREWELL.

(*The London Magazine*, July, 1824.)

[Talfourd mentions, in regard to this farewell performance, that so densely crowded was the house, that Elia and his sister had to be accommodated with seats in the orchestra, adding that, during the course of the evening, his attention was called by Miss Kelly, from their upper box, to an incident then taking place, unobserved by the rest of the house, in that snug corner of the orchestra!—Munden at the little flap door handing in a pot of porter, Lamb quaffing it to the dregs with a relish—the comedian looking on with inexpressible gusto, while the humorist was draining his tankard! Half a century afterwards, the editor of this Popular Centenary Edition has it from the lips of Miss Kelly (now, in the October of 1875, just entering the eighty-sixth year of her age) that she bears the incident still vividly in her remembrance, her impression being that that extra pot of porter was sent round by herself. Upon this occasion Mary Lamb, in the midst of her brother's grief for the loss of an old favourite, convulsed him with laughter by her punning exclamation, "Sic transit gloria *Munden!*"]

THE regular playgoers ought to put on mourning, for the king of broad comedy is dead to the drama!—Alas!—Munden is no more!—give sorrow vent. He may yet walk the town, pace the pavement in a seeming existence—eat, drink, and nod to his friends in all the affectation of life—but Munden,—*the* Munden!—Munden, who with the bunch of countenances, the bouquet of faces, is gone for ever from the lamps, and, as far as comedy is concerned, is as dead as Garrick! When an actor retires (we will put the *suicide* as mildly as possible) how many worthy persons perish with him!—With Munden,—Sir Peter Teazle must experience a shock—Sir Robert Bramble gives up the ghost—Crack ceases to breathe. Without Munden what becomes of Dozey? Where shall we seek Jemmy Jumps? Nipperkin and a thousand of such admirable fooleries fall to nothing, and the departure therefore of such an actor as Munden is a dramatic calamity. On the night that this inestimable humourist took farewell of the public, he also took his benefit:—a benefit in which the public assuredly did not participate. The play was Coleman's *Poor Gentleman*, with Tom Dibdin's farce of *Past Ten o'Clock*. Reader, we all know Munden in Sir Robert Bramble, and Old Tobacco complexioned Dozey;—we all have seen the old hearty baronet in his light sky-blue coat and genteel cocked hat; and we have all seen the weather-beaten old pensioner, Dear Old Dozey, tacking about the stage in that intense blue sea livery—drunk as heart could wish, and right valorous in memory. On this night Munden seemed like the Gladiator "to rally life's whole energies to die," and as we were present at this great display of his powers, and as this will be the last opportunity that will ever be afforded us to speak of this admirable performer, we shall "consecrate," as Old John Buncle says, "a paragraph to him."

The house was full,—*full!*—pshaw! that's an empty word!—The house was stufled, crammed with people—crammed from the swing door of the pit to the back seat in the banished *one shilling*. A quart of audience may be said (vintner-like, may it be said) to have been squeezed into a pint of theatre. Every hearty play-going Londoner, who remembered Munden years agone, mustered up his courage and his money for this benefit—and middle-aged people were therefore by no means scarce. The comedy chosen for the occasion, is one that travels a long way without a guard;—it is not until the third or fourth act, we think, that Sir Robert Bramble appears on the stage. When he entered, his reception was earnest,—noisy,—outrageous,—waving of hats and handkerchiefs,—deafening shouts,—clamorous beating of sticks,—all the various ways in which the heart is accustomed to manifest its joy were had recourse to on this occasion. Mrs. Bamfield worked away with a sixpenny fan till she scudded only under bare poles. Mr. Whittington wore out the ferule

of a new nine-and-sixpenny umbrella. Gratitude did great damage on the joyful occasion.

The old performer, the veteran, as he appropriately called himself in the farewell speech, was plainly overcome; he pressed his hands together, he planted one solidly on his breast, he bowed, he sidled, he cried! When the noise subsided (which it invariably does at last) the comedy proceeded, and Munden gave an admirable picture of the rich, eccentric, charitable old bachelor baronet, who goes about with Humphrey Dobbin at his heels, and philanthropy in his heart. How crustily and yet how kindly he takes Humphrey's contradictions! How readily he puts himself into an attitude for arguing! How tenderly he gives a loose to his heart on the apprehension of Frederick's duel. In truth he played Sir Robert in his very ripest manner, and it was impossible not to feel in the very midst of pleasure regret that Munden should then be before us for the last time.

In the farce he became richer and richer; Old Dozey is a plant from Greenwich. The bronzed face—and neck to match—the long curtain of a coat—the straggling white hair—the propensity, the determined attachment to grog,—are all from Greenwich. Munden, as Dozey, seems never to have been out of action, sun, and drink. He looks (alas he *looked*) fireproof. His face and throat were dried like a raisin, and his legs walked under the rum-and-water with all the indecision which that inestimable beverage usually inspires. It is truly tacking, not walking. He *steers* at a table, and the tide of grog now and then bears him off the point. On this night, he seemed to us to be doomed to fall in action, and we therefore looked at him, as some of the *Victory's* crew are said to have gazed upon Nelson, with a consciousness that his ardour and his uniform were worn for the last time. In the scene where Dozey describes a sea fight, the actor never was greater, and he seemed the personification of an old seventy-four! His coat hung like a flag at his poop! His phiz was not a whit less highly coloured than one of those lustrous visages which generally superintend the head of a ship! There was something cumbrous, indecisive, and awful in his veerings! Once afloat, it appeared impossible for him to come to his moorings; once at anchor, it did not seem an easy thing to get him under weigh!

The time, however, came for the fall of the curtain, and for the fall of Munden! The farce of the night was finished. The farce of the long forty years' play was over! He stepped forward, not as Dozey, but as Munden, and we heard him address us from the stage for the last time. He trusted, unwisely we think, to a written paper. He *read* of "heart-felt recollections," and "indelible impressions." He stammered, and he pressed his heart,—and put on his spectacles,—and blundered his written gratitudes,—and wiped his eyes, and bowed—and stood,—and at last staggered away for ever! The plan of his farewell was bad, but the long life of excellence which really made his farewell pathetic, overcame all defects, and the people and Joe Munden parted like lovers! Well! Farewell to the Rich Old Heart! May thy retirement be as full of repose, as thy public life was full of excellence! We must all have our farewell benefits in our turn.

## THE DEATH OF MUNDEN.

(*The Athenæum*, 11th February, 1832.)

[A facsimile, from the original manuscript, is given upon the opposite page. Especial note should be taken of the underlining touches of the pen—suggestive of the very inflections of the voice, the twinkling eyes, and the dimpling lines about the mouth of the master humorist.]

YOUR communication to me of the death of Munden made me weep. Now,

He was imaginative, he could impress upon an audience an idea, the low one perhaps of a ~~shoulder~~ leg of mutton & turnips, but such was the grandeur & singleness of his expressions, that that single expression could convey to all his auditory a notion of all the pleasures they had all received from all the shoulders of mutton and turnips they had ever eaten in their lives. Now, this is not acting, nor do I set down Munden amongst my Old Actors. He was only a wonderful man, exerting his ~~so~~ vivid impressions thro' the agency of the stage.

sir, I am not of the melting mood; but, in these serious times, the loss of half the world's fun is no trivial deprivation. It was my loss (or *gain* shall I call it?) in the early time of my play-going, to have missed all Munden's acting. There was only he and Lewis at Covent Garden, while Drury Lane was exuberant with Parsons, Dodd, &c., such a comic company as, I suppose, the stage never showed. Thence, in the evening of my life, I had Munden all to myself, more mellowed, richer, perhaps, than ever. I cannot say what his change of faces produced in me. It was not acting. He was not one of my "old actors." It might be better. His power was extravagant. I saw him one evening in three drunken characters. Three farces were played. One part was Dozey—I forget the rest,—but they were so discriminated, that a stranger might have seen them all, and not have dreamed that he was seeing the same actor. I am jealous for the actors who pleased my youth. He was not a Parsons or a Dodd, but he was more wonderful. He seemed as if he could *do* anything. He was not an actor, but something *better*, if you please. Shall I instance Old Foresight in *Love for Love*, in which Parsons was at once the old man, the astrologer, &c. Munden dropped the old man, the doater—which makes the character—but he substituted for it a moon-struck character, a perfect abstraction from this earth, that looked as if he had newly come down from the planets. Now, *that* is not what I call *acting*. It might be better. He was imaginative; he could impress upon an audience an *idea*—the low one perhaps of a leg of mutton and turnips; but such was the grandeur and singleness of his expressions, that that single expression would convey to all his auditory a notion of all the pleasures they had all received from all the legs of mutton *and turnips* they had ever eaten in their lives. Now, this is not *acting*, nor do I set down Munden amongst my old actors. He was only a wonderful man, exerting his vivid impressions through the agency of the stage. In one only thing did I see him *act*—that is, support a character; it was in a wretched farce called *Johnny Gilpin*, for Dowton's benefit, in which he did a cockney; the thing ran but one night; but when I say that Lubin's Log was nothing to it, I say little; it was transcendent. And here, let me say of actors —*envious* actors—that of *Munden*, Liston was used to speak, almost with the enthusiasm due to the dead, in terms of such allowed superiority to every actor on the stage, and this at a time when Munden was gone by in the world's estimation, that it convinced me that *artists* (in which term I include poets, painters, &c.) are not so envious as the world think. I have little time, and therefore enclose a criticism on Munden's Old Dozey and his general acting, by a gentleman, who attends less to these things than formerly, but whose criticism I think masterly.

## Modern Gallantry.

(*The London Magazine*, November, 1822.)

[In his Sketch of Lamb's Life, published in 1837, Talfourd asserts that the account in this paper of Joseph Paice's politeness "could be attested to the letter by living witnesses."]

In comparing modern with ancient manners, we are pleased to compliment ourselves upon the point of gallantry; a certain obsequiousness, or deferential respect, which we are supposed to pay to females, as females.

I shall believe that this principle actuates our conduct, when I can forget, that in the nineteenth century of the era from which we date our civility, we are but just beginning to leave off the very frequent practice of whipping females in public, in common with the coarsest male offenders.

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the stage.

sir, I am not of the melting mood; but, in these serious times, the loss of half the world's fun is no trivial deprivation. It was my loss (or *gain* shall I call it?) in the early time of my play-going, to have missed all Munden's acting. There was only he and Lewis at Covent Garden, while Drury Lane was exuberant with Parsons, Dodd, &c., such a comic company as, I suppose, the stage never showed. Thence, in the evening of my life, I had Munden all to myself, more mellowed, richer, perhaps, than ever. I cannot say what his change of faces produced in me. It was not acting. He was not one of my "old actors." It might be better. His power was extravagant. I saw him one evening in three drunken characters. Three farces were played. One part was Dozey—I forget the rest,—but they were so discriminated, that a stranger might have seen them all, and not have dreamed that he was seeing the same actor. I am jealous for the actors who pleased my youth. He was not a Parsons or a Dodd, but he was more wonderful. He seemed as if he could *do* anything. He was not an actor, but something *better*, if you please. Shall I instance Old Foresight in *Love for Love*, in which Parsons was at once the old man, the astrologer, &c. Munden dropped the old man, the doater—which makes the character—but he substituted for it a moon-struck character, a perfect abstraction from this earth, that looked as if he had newly come down from the planets. Now, *that* is not what I call *acting*. It might be better. He was imaginative; he could impress upon an audience an *idea*—the low one perhaps of a leg of mutton and turnips; but such was the grandeur and singleness of his expressions, that that single expression would convey to all his auditory a notion of all the pleasures they had all received from all the legs of mutton *and turnips* they had ever eaten in their lives. Now, this is not *acting*, nor do I set down Munden amongst my old actors. He was only a wonderful man, exerting his vivid impressions through the agency of the stage. In one only thing did I see him *act*—that is, support a character; it was in a wretched farce called *Johnny Gilpin*, for Dowton's benefit, in which he did a cockney; the thing ran but one night; but when I say that Lubin's Log was nothing to it, I say little; it was transcendent. And here, let me say of actors—*envious* actors—that of *Munden*, Liston was used to speak, almost with the enthusiasm due to the dead, in terms of such allowed superiority to every actor on the stage, and this at a time when Munden was gone by in the world's estimation, that it convinced me that *artists* (in which term I include poets, painters, &c.) are not so envious as the world think. I have little time, and therefore enclose a criticism on Munden's Old Dozey and his general acting, by a gentleman, who attends less to these things than formerly, but whose criticism I think masterly.

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IN comparing modern with ancient manners, we are pleased to compliment ourselves upon the point of gallantry; a certain obsequiousness, or deferential respect, which we are supposed to pay to females, as females.

I shall believe that this principle actuates our conduct, when I can forget, that in the nineteenth century of the era from which we date our civility, we are but just beginning to leave off the very frequent practice of whipping females in public, in common with the coarsest male offenders.

I shall believe it to be influential, when I can shut my eyes to the fact, that in England women are still occasionally—hanged.

I shall believe in it, when actresses are no longer subject to be hissed off a stage by gentlemen.

I shall believe in it, when Dorimant hands a fish-wife across the kennel ; or assists the apple-woman to pick up her wandering fruit, which some unlucky dray has just dissipated.

I shall believe in it, when the Dorimants in humbler life, who would be thought in their way notable adepts in this refinement, shall act upon it in places where they are not known, or think themselves not observed—when I shall see the traveller for some rich tradesman part with his admired box-coat, to spread it over the defenceless shoulders of the poor woman, who is passing to her parish on the roof of the same stage-coach with him, drenched in the rain—when I shall no longer see a woman standing up in the pit of a London theatre, till she is sick and faint with the exertion, with men about her, seated at their ease, and jeering at her distress ; till one, that seems to have more manners or conscience than the rest, significantly declares "she should be welcome to his seat, if she were a little younger and handsomer." Place this dapper warehouseman, or that rider, in a circle of their own female acquaintance, and you shall confess you have not seen a politer-bred man in Lothbury.

Lastly, I shall begin to believe that there is some such principle influencing our conduct, when more than one-half of the drudgery and coarse servitude of the world shall cease to be performed by women.

Until that day comes, I shall never believe this boasted point to be anything more than a conventional fiction ; a pageant got up between the sexes, in a certain rank, and at a certain time of life, in which both find their account equally.

I shall be even disposed to rank it among the salutary fictions of life, when in polite circles I shall see the same attentions paid to age as to youth, to homely features as to handsome, to coarse complexions as to clear—to the woman, as she is a woman, not as she is a beauty, a fortune, or a title.

I shall believe it to be something more than a name, when a well-dressed gentleman in a well-dressed company can advert to the topic of *female old age* without exciting, and intending to excite, a sneer :—when the phrases "antiquated virginity," and such a one has "overstood her market," pronounced in good company, shall raise immediate offence in man, or woman, that shall hear them spoken.

Joseph Paice, of Bread Street Hill, merchant, and one of the Directors of the South-Sea Company—the same to whom Edwards, the Shakspere commentator, has addressed a fine sonnet—was the only pattern of consistent gallantry I have met with. He took me under his shelter at an early age, and bestowed some pains upon me. I owe to his precepts and example whatever there is of the man of business (and that is not much) in my composition. It was not his fault that I did not profit more. Though bred a Presbyterian, and brought up a merchant, he was the finest gentleman of his time. He had not *one* system of attention to females in the drawing-room, and *another* in the shop, or at the stall. I do not mean that he made no distinction. But he never lost sight of sex, or overlooked it in the casualties of a disadvantageous situation. I have seen him stand bare-headed—smile if you please—to a poor servant girl, while she has been inquiring of him the way to some street—in such a posture of unforced civility, as neither to embarrass her in the acceptance, nor himself in the offer, of it. He was no dangler, in the common acceptation of the word, after women : but he reverenced and upheld, in every form in which it came before him, *womanhood.* I have seen him—nay, smile not—tenderly escorting a market-woman, whom he had encountered in a shower, exalting his umbrella over her poor basket of fruit, that it might

receive no damage, with as much carefulness as if she had been a countess. To the reverend form of Female Eld he would yield the wall (though it were to an ancient beggar-woman) with more ceremony than we could afford to show our grandams. He was the Preux Chevalier of Age; the Sir Calidore, or Sir Tristan, to those who have no Calidores or Tristans to defend them. The roses, that had long faded thence, still bloomed for him in those withered and yellow cheeks.

He was never married, but in his youth he paid his addresses to the beautiful Susan Winstanley—old Winstanley's daughter of Clapton—who, dying in the early days of their courtship, confirmed in him the resolution of perpetual bachelorship. It was during their short courtship, he told me, that he had been one day treating his mistress with a profusion of civil speeches—the common gallantries—to which kind of thing she had hitherto manifested no repugnance—but in this instance with no effect. He could not obtain from her a decent acknowledgment in return. She rather seemed to resent his compliments. He could not set it down to caprice, for the lady had always shown herself above that littleness. When he ventured on the following day, finding her a little better humoured, to expostulate with her on her coldness of yesterday, she confessed, with her usual frankness, that she had no sort of dislike to his attentions; that she could even endure some high-flown compliments; that a young woman placed in her situation had a right to expect all sort of civil things said to her; that she hoped she could digest a dose of adulation, short of insincerity, with as little injury to her humility as most young women: but that—a little before he had commenced his compliments—she had overheard him by accident, in rather rough language, rating a young woman, who had not brought home his cravats quite to the appointed time, and she thought to herself, "As I am Miss Susan Winstanley, and a young lady—a reputed beauty, and known to be a fortune,—I can have my choice of the finest speeches from the mouth of this very fine gentleman who is courting me—but if I had been poor Mary Such-a-one (*naming the milliner*),—and had failed of bringing home the cravats to the appointed hour—though perhaps I had sat up half the night to forward them—what sort of compliments should I have received then?—And my woman's pride came to my assistance; and I thought, that if it were only to do *me* honour, a female, like myself, might have received handsomer usage: and I was determined not to accept any fine speeches, to the compromise of that sex, the belonging to which was after all my strongest claim and title to them."

I think the lady discovered both generosity, and a just way of thinking, in this rebuke which she gave her lover; and I have sometimes imagined, that the uncommon strain of courtesy, which through life regulated the actions and behaviour of my friend towards all of womankind indiscriminately, owed its happy origin to this seasonable lesson from the lips of his lamented mistress.

I wish the whole female world would entertain the same notion of these things that Miss Winstanley showed. Then we should see something of the spirit of consistent gallantry; and no longer witness the anomaly of the same man—a pattern of true politeness to a wife—of cold contempt, or rudeness, to a sister—the idolater of his female mistress—the disparager and despiser of his no less female aunt, or unfortunate—still female—maiden cousin. Just so much respect as a woman derogates from her own sex, in whatever condition placed—her handmaid, or dependent—she deserves to have diminished from herself on that score; and probably will feel the diminution, when youth, and beauty, and advantages, not inseparable from sex, shall lose of their attraction. What a woman should demand of a man in courtship, or after it, is first—respect for her as she is a woman;—and next to that—to be respected by him above all other women. But let her stand upon her female character as upon a foundation; and let the attentions, incident to individual preference, be so

many pretty additaments and ornaments—as many and as fanciful, as you please—to that main structure. Let her first lesson be—with sweet Susan Winstanley—to *reverence her sex.*

# A Character of the late Elia.

## BY A FRIEND.

(*The London Magazine,* January, 1823.)

[When the final series of the Essays of Elia appeared in book form, the following paper (less the closing paragraphs, signed Phil-Elia, which are here restored but duly bracketed) was given at the opening of that volume in 1833, by way of "Preface by a friend of the late Elia." As it was evidently designed by Charles Lamb as a Farewell to the first series, rather than as an Introduction to the last, the paper is given here intermediately.]

THIS gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the *London Magazine* will henceforth know him no more.

Exactly at twelve last night, his queer spirit departed; and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining-room of his friends Taylor and Hessey, and the company, assembled there to welcome in another first of January, checked their carousals in mid-mirth, and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle Procter, in a whisper, signified his intention of devoting an elegy; and Allan Cunningham, nobly forgetful of his countrymen's wrongs, vowed a memoir to his *manes* full and friendly as a "Tale of Lyddalcross."

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humour of the thing, if there was ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you—a sort of unlicked, incondite things—villanously pranked in an affected array of antique moods and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been other than such; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in a former Essay (to save many instances) where under the *first person* (his favourite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connections—in direct oppposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs and affections of another—making himself many, or reducing many unto himself—then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by

another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure—irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred.—He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken), which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested.—Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune; and, as to such people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados*, to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the surface of society; and the colour, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him—but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalized (and offences were sure to arise), he could not help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to him? He was temperate in his meals and diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry—as the friendly vapour ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments, which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statist!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend has departed. His jests were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him. In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtseyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him*. "They take me for a visiting governor," he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He

had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis* never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

[He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his *escritoire*, which have been handed over to the editor of this magazine, in which it is to be hoped they will shortly appear, retaining his accustomed singature.

He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the export department of the East India House will forgive me if I acknowledge the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging manner the desk at which he had been planted for forty years; showed me ponderous tomes of figuers in his own remarkably neat hand, which, more properly than his few printed tracts, might be called his "Works." They seemed affectionate to his memory, and universally commended his expertness in book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian double entry (I think they called it) with the brevity and facility of some newer German system; but I am not able to appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and how fortunate he considered himself in having his lot thrown in amongst them. "There is more sense, more discourse, more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks," he would say, "than in twice the number of authors by profession that I have conversed with." He would brighten up sometimes upon the "old days of the India House," when he consorted with Woodroffe and Wissett, and Peter Corbet (a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet); and Hoole, who translated Tasso; and Bartlemy Brown, whose father (God assoil him therefore!) modernized Walton; and sly, warm-hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those days) and Campe and Fombelle, and a world of choice spirits, more than I can remember to name, who associated in those days with Jack Burrell (the *bon-vivant* of the South Sea House); and little Eyton (said to be a fac-simile of Pope,—he was a miniature of a gentleman), that was cashier under him; and Dan Voight of the Custom-house, that left the famous library.

Well, Elia is gone,—for aught I know, to be re-united with them,—and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors! Of all they said or did in their life-time a few glittering words only! His Essays found some favourers, as they appeared separately; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his "weaved-up follies."

PHIL-ELIA.]

# The Essays of Elia.

## SECOND SERIES.

[Exactly ten years after the first series of these Essays had been published in two volumes by the Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, under the laconic heading of "Elia," a second series was issued from the press by Edward Moxon in 1833, called more explicitly "The Last Essays of Elia." These, unlike their predecessors, which had all of them with one exception appeared originally in the *London Magazine*, were brought together from various scattered sources, and printed as a collection without any regard to chronological sequence. They are here given, however, in accordance with the system adopted throughout this Popular Centenary Edition, in the precise order in which they were first published as contributions to the periodicals.]

## Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading.

(*The London Magazine*, July, 1822.)

[It has been conjectured that the stanzas with which the subjoined essay is brought to a conclusion, and which are here spoken of as by "a quaint poetess of our day," formed one of Mary Lamb's contributions to the little work conjointly written by herself and her brother Charles, under the title of "Poetry for Children." "Martin B——" was Elia's old friend Martin Burney.]

To mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now I think a man of quality and breeding may be much amused with the natural sprouts of his own.—*Lord Foppington, in the Relapse.*

An ingenious acquaintance of my own was so much struck with this bright sally of his Lordship, that he has left off reading altogether, to the great improvement of his originality. At the hazard of losing some credit on this head, I must confess that I dedicate no inconsiderable portion of my time to other people's thoughts. I dream away my life in others' speculations. I love to lose myself in other men's minds. When I am not walking, I am reading; I cannot sit and think. Books think for me.

I have no repugnances. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. I can read anything which I call a *book*. There are things in that shape which I cannot allow for such.

In this catalogue of *books which are no books—biblia a-biblia*—I reckon Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket Books (the Literary excepted), Draught Boards bound and lettered at the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacks, Statutes at Large; the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, Soame Jenyns, and, generally, all those volumes which "no gentleman's library should be without:" the Histories of Flavius Josephus (that learned Jew), and Paley's

Moral Philosophy. With these exceptions, I can read almost anything. I bless my stars for a taste so catholic, so unexcluding.

I confess that it moves my spleen to see these *things in books' clothing* perched upon shelves, like false saints, usurpers of true shrines, intruders into the sanctuary, thrusting out the legitimate occupants. To reach down a well-bound semblance of a volume, and hope it some kind-hearted play-book, then, opening what "seem its leaves," to come bolt upon a withering Population Essay. To expect a Steele, or a Farquhar, and find—Adam Smith. To view a well-arranged assortment of blockheaded Encyclopædias (Anglicanas or Metropolitanas) set out in an array of Russia, or Morocco, when a tithe of that good leather would comfortably re-clothe my shivering folios; would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymund Lully to look like himself again in the world. I never see these impostors, but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.

To be strong-backed and neat-bound is the desideratum of a volume. Magnificence comes after. This, when it can be afforded, is not to be lavished upon all kinds of books indiscriminately. I would not dress a set of Magazines, for instance, in full suit. The déshabille, or half-binding (with Russia backs ever) is *our* costume. A Shakspere, or a Milton (unless the first editions), it were mere foppery to trick out in gay apparel. The possession of them confers no distinction. The exterior of them (the things themselves being so common), strange to say, raises no sweet emotions, no tickling sense of property in the owner. Thomson's Seasons, again, looks best (I maintain it) a little torn, and dog's-eared. How beautiful to a genuine lover of reading are the sullied leaves, and worn-out appearance, nay, the very odour (beyond Russia), if we would not forget kind feelings in fastidiousness, of an old "Circulating Library" Tom Jones, or Vicar of Wakefield! How they speak of the thousand thumbs, that have turned over their pages with delight!—of the lone sempstress whom they may have cheered (milliner or harder-working mantua maker) after her long day's needle-toil, running far into midnight, when she has snatched an hour, ill spared from sleep, to steep her cares, as in some Lethean cup, in spelling out their enchanting contents! Who would have them a whit less soiled? What better condition could we desire to see them in?

In some respects the better a book is, the less it demands from binding. Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and all that class of perpetually self-reproductive volumes—Great Nature's Stereotypes—we see them individually perish with less regret, because we know the copies of them to be "eterne." But where a book is at once both good and rare—where the individual is almost the species, and when *that* perishes,

> "We know not where is that Promethean torch
> That can its light relumine"—

such a book, for instance, as the Life of the Duke of Newcastle, by his Duchess—no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently durable, to honour and keep safe such a jewel.

Not only rare volumes of this description, which seem hopeless ever to be reprinted; but old editions of writers, such as Sir Philip Sydney, Bishop Taylor, Milton in his prose-works, Fuller—of whom we *have* reprints, yet the books themselves, though they go about, and are talked of here and there, we know, have not endenizened themselves (nor possibly ever will) in the national heart, so as to become stock books—it is good to possess these in durable and costly covers. I do not care for a First Folio of Shakspere. You cannot make a *pet* book of an author whom everybody reads. I rather prefer the common editions of Rowe and Tonson, without notes, and with *plates*, which, being so execrably bad, serve as maps, or modest remembrancers, to the text; and

without pretending to any supposable emulation with it, are so much better than the Shakspere gallery *engravings*, which *did*. I have a community of feeling with my countrymen about his Plays, and I like those editions of him best, which have been oftenest tumbled about and handled.—On the contrary, I cannot read Beaumont and Fletcher but in Folio. The Octavo editions are painful to look at. I have no sympathy with them. If they were as much read as the current editions of the other poet, I should prefer them in that shape to the older one. I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the Anatomy of Melancholy. What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding-sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure? what hapless stationer could dream of Burton ever becoming popular?—The wretched Malone could not do worse, when he bribed the sexton of Stratford church to let him white-wash the painted effigy of old Shakspere, which stood there, in rude but lively fashion depicted, to the very colour of the cheek, the eye, the eye-brow, hair, the very dress he used to wear—the only authentic testimony we had, however imperfect, of these curious parts and parcels of him. They covered him over with a coat of white paint. By ——, if I had been a justice of peace for Warwickshire, I would have clapped both commentator and sexton fast in the stocks, for a pair of meddling sacrilegious varlets.

I think I see them at their work—these sapient trouble-tombs.

Shall I be thought fantastical, if I confess, that the names of some of our poets sound sweeter, and have a finer relish to the ear—to mine, at least—than that of Milton or of Shakspere? It may be, that the latter are more staled and rung upon in common discourse. The sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention, are, Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley.

Much depends upon *when* and *where* you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes, before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up the Faërie Queene for a stop-gap, or a volume of Bishop Andrewes' sermons?

Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him. But he brings his music, to which, who listens, had need bring docile thoughts, and purged ears.

Winter evenings—the world shut out—with less of ceremony the gentle Shakspere enters. At such a season, the *Tempest*, or his own *Winter's Tale*—

These two poets you cannot avoid reading aloud—to yourself, or (as it chances) to some single person listening. More than one—and it degenerates into an audience.

Books of quick interest, that hurry on for incidents, are for the eye to glide over only. It will not do to read them out. I could never listen to even the better kind of modern novels without extreme irksomeness.

A newspaper, read out, is intolerable. In some of the Bank offices it is the custom (to save so much individual time) for one of the clerks—who is the best scholar—to commence upon the Times, or the Chronicle, and recite its entire contents aloud *pro bono publico*. With every advantage of lungs and elocution, the effect is singularly vapid. In barbers' shops and public-houses a fellow will get up, and spell out a paragraph, which he communicates as some discovery. Another fellow with *his* selection. So the entire journal transpires at length by piece-meal. Seldom-readers are slow readers, and, without this expedient, no one in the company would probably ever travel through the contents of a whole paper.

Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment.

What an eternal time that gentleman in black, at Nando's, keeps the paper!

I am sick of hearing the waiter bawling out incessantly, "The Chronicle is in hand, sir."

As in these little diurnals I generally skip the Foreign News, the Debates and the Politics, I find the *Morning Herald* by far the most entertaining of them. It is an agreeable miscellany rather than a newspaper.

Coming in to an inn at night—having ordered your supper—what can be more delightful than to find lying in the window-seat, left there time out of mind by the carelessness of some former guest—two or three numbers of the old Town and Country Magazine, with its amusing *tête-à-tête* pictures—"The Royal Lover and Lady G——;" "The Melting Platonic and the Old Beau," —and such like antiquated scandal? Would you exchange it—at that time, and in that place—for a better book?

Poor Tobin, who latterly fell blind, did not regret it so much for the weightier kinds of reading—the Paradise Lost, or Comus, he could have *read* to him—but he missed the pleasure of skimming over with his own eye a magazine, or a light pamphlet.

I should not care to be caught in the serious avenues of some cathedral alone, and reading *Candide.*

I do not remember a more whimsical surprise than having been once detected—by a familiar damsel—reclined at my ease upon the grass, on Primrose Hill (her Cythera), reading—*Pamela.* There was nothing in the book to make a man seriously ashamed at the exposure; but as she seated herself down by me, and seemed determined to read in company, I could have wished it had been—any other book. We read on very sociably for a few pages; and, not finding the author much to her taste, she got up, and—went away. Gentle casuist, I leave it to thee to conjecture, whether the blush (for there was one between us) was the property of the nymph or the swain in this dilemma. From me you shall never get the secret.

I am not much a friend to out-of-doors reading. I cannot settle my spirits to it. I knew a Unitarian minister, who was generally to be seen upon Snow Hill (as yet Skinner's Street *was not*), between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, studying a volume of Lardner. I own this to have been a strain of abstraction beyond my reach. I used to admire how he sidled along, keeping clear of secular contacts. An illiterate encounter with a porter's knot, or a bread basket, would have quickly put to flight all the theology I am master of, and have left me worse than indifferent to the five points.

I was once amused—there is a pleasure in *affecting* affectation—at the indignation of a crowd that was jostling in with me at the pit-door of Covent Garden Theatre, to have a sight of Master Betty—then at once in his dawn and his meridian—in *Hamlet.* I had been invited, quite unexpectedly, to join a party, whom I met near the door of the play-house, and I happened to have in my hand a large octavo of Johnson and Steevens's *Shakspeare*, which, the time not admitting of my carrying it home, of course went with me to the theatre. Just in the very heat and pressure of the doors opening—the *rush*, as they term it—I deliberately held the volume over my head, open at the scene in which the young Roscius had been most cried up, and quietly read by the lamp-light. The clamour became universal. "The affectation of the fellow," cried one. "Look at that gentleman *reading*, papa," squeaked a young lady, who, in her admiration of the novelty, almost forgot her fears. I read on. "He ought to have his book knocked out of his hand," exclaimed a pursy cit, whose arms were too fast pinioned to his side to suffer him to execute his kind intention. Still I read on—and, till the time came to pay my money, kept as unmoved as Saint Anthony at his holy offices, with the satyrs, apes, and hobgoblins mopping and making mouths at him, in the picture, while the good man sits as undisturbed at the sight as if he were the sole tenant of the desert.—The individual rabble (I recognized more than one of

their ugly faces) had damned a slight piece of mine a few nights before, and I was determined the culprits should not a second time put me out of countenance.

There is a class of street-readers whom I can never contemplate without affection—the poor gentry, who, not having wherewithal to buy or hire a book, filch a little learning at the open stalls—the owner, with his hard eye, casting envious looks at them all the while, and thinking when they will have done. Venturing tenderly, page after page, expecting every moment when he shall interpose his interdict, and yet unable to deny themselves the gratification, they "snatch a fearful joy." Martin B—, in this way, by daily fragments, got through two volumes of Clarissa, when the stall-keeper damped his laudable ambition, by asking him (it was in his younger days) whether he meant to purchase the work. M. declares, that under no circumstances of his life did he ever peruse a book with half the satisfaction which he took in those uneasy snatches. A quaint poetess of our day has moralized upon this subject in two very touching but homely stanzas.

> I saw a boy with eager eye
> Open a book upon a stall,
> And read as he'd devour it all:
> Which when the stall-man did espy,
> Soon to the boy I heard him call,
> "You, sir, you never buy a book,
> Therefore in one you shall not look."
> The boy pass'd slowly on, and with a sigh
> He wish'd he never had been taught to read,
> Then of the old churl's books he should have had no need.
>
> Of sufferings the poor have many,
> Which never can the rich annoy.
> I soon perceived another boy,
> Who look'd as if he'd not had any
> Food, for that day at least—enjoy
> The sight of cold meat in a tavern larder.
> This boy's case, then thought I, is surely harder,
> Thus hungry, longing, thus without a penny,
> Beholding choice of dainty-dressèd meat:
> No wonder if he wish he ne'er had learn'd to eat.

# Confessions of a Drunkard.

(*The London Magazine*, August, 1822.)

[This paper was originally penned by Charles Lamb, in compliance with the request of his friend Basil Montagu, under whose editorship it was published, as one of a collection of tracts in furtherance of the cause of temperance. For a reason which caused great pain at the time to its author, it was reprinted in the autumn of 1822, in "The Lion's Mouth" of the *London Magazine*. Its republication then was necessitated by the appearance in the *Quarterly* for April, 1822, of an article upon Dr. John Reid's treatise on Hypocondriasis and other Nervous Affections, in the course of which the Confessions of a Drunkard were spoken of as affording "a fearful picture of the consequences of intemperance, and which," said the reviewer, "we have reason to know is a true tale." This malig-

nant insinuation that there was biographic truth in what was a purely imaginary description, was, many years afterwards, repeated in cold blood, with the cruelest precision, when Charles Lamb's remains had long been lying peacefully in their grave at Edmonton. The Confessions of a Drunkard were then reprinted in another series of temperance tracts, called "Beacon Lights," where they were described as "published anonymously many years ago, but not known to have been indited as a record of his own experiences, by the celebrated Charles Lamb, whose sparkling wit," &c.,—the venomous slander thus trailing off into frothy compliment. Eventually, however, the compiler of "Beacon Lights" had the grace to withdraw that painful mis-statement, and with it this famous Elian Essay, replacing the latter with the lamentable and "ower true" story of Hartley Coleridge's Experiences.]

DEHORTATIONS from the use of strong liquors have been the favourite topic of sober declaimers in all ages, and have been received with abundance of applause by water-drinking critics. But with the patient himself, the man that is to be cured, unfortunately their sound has seldom prevailed. Yet the evil is acknowledged, the remedy is simple. Abstain. No force can oblige a man to raise the glass to his head against his will. 'Tis as easy as not to steal, not to tell lies.

Alas! the hand to pilfer, and the tongue to bear false witness, have no constitutional tendency. These are actions indifferent to them. At the first instance of the reformed will, they can be brought off without a murmur. The itching finger is but a figure in speech, and the tongue of the liar can with the same natural delight give forth useful truths, with which it has been accustomed to scatter their pernicious contraries. But when a man has commenced sot——

O pause, thou sturdy moralist, thou person of stout nerves and a strong head, whose liver is happily untouched, and ere thy gorge riseth at the *name* which I had written, first learn what the *thing* is; how much of compassion, how much of human allowance, thou mayest virtuously mingle with thy disapprobation. Trample not on the ruins of a man. Exact not, under so terrible a penalty as infamy, a resuscitation from a state of death almost as real as that from which Lazarus arose not but by a miracle.

Begin a reformation, and custom will make it easy. But what if the beginning be dreadful, the first steps, not like climbing a mountain, but going through fire? what if the whole system must undergo a change violent as that which we conceive of the mutation of form in some insects? what if a process comparable to flaying alive be to be gone through? is the weakness that sinks under such struggles to be confounded with the pertinacity which clings to other vices, which have induced no constitutional necessity, no engagement of the whole victim, body and soul?

I have known one in that state, when he has tried to abstain but for one evening,—though the poisonous potion had long since ceased to bring back its first enchantments, though he was sure it would rather deepen his gloom than brighten it,—in the violence of the struggle, and the necessity he had felt of getting rid of the present sensation at any rate, I have known him to scream out, to cry aloud, for the anguish and pain of the strife within him.

Why should I hesitate to declare, that the man of whom I speak is myself? I have no puling apology to make to mankind. I see them all in one way or another deviating from the pure reason. It is to my own nature alone I am accountable for the woe that I have brought upon it.

I believe that there are constitutions, robust heads and iron insides whom scarce any excesses can hurt; whom brandy (I have seen them drink it like wine), at all events whom wine, taken in ever so plentiful a measure, can do no worse injury to than just to muddle their faculties, perhaps never very pellucid. On them this discourse is wasted. They would but laugh at a weak brother, who, trying his strength with them, and coming off foiled from the contest, would fain persuade them that such agonistic exercises are

dangerous. It is to a very different description of persons I speak. It is to the weak—the nervous; to those who feel the want of some artificial aid to raise their spirits in society to what is no more than the ordinary pitch of all around them without it. This is the secret of our drinking. Such must fly the convivial board in the first instance, if they do not mean to sell themselves for term of life.

Twelve years ago I had completed my six-and-twentieth year. I had lived from the period of leaving school to that time pretty much in solitude. My companions were chiefly books, or at most one or two living ones of my own book-loving and sober stamp. I rose early, went to bed betimes, and the faculties which God had given me, I have reason to think, did not rust in me unused.

About that time I fell in with some companions of a different order. They were men of boisterous spirits, sitters up a-nights, disputants, drunken; yet seemed to have something noble about them. We dealt about the wit, or what passes for it after midnight, jovially. Of the quality called fancy I certainly possessed a larger share than my companions. Encouraged by their applause, I set up for a professed joker! I, who of all men am least fitted for such an occupation, having, in addition to the greatest difficulty which I experience at all times of finding words to express my meaning, a natural nervous impediment in my speech!

Reader, if you are gifted with nerves like mine, aspire to any character but that of a wit. When you find a tickling relish upon your tongue disposing you to that sort of conversation, especially if you find a supernatural flow of ideas setting in upon you at the sight of a bottle and fresh glasses, avoid giving way to it as you would fly your greatest destruction. If you cannot crush the power of fancy, or that within you which you mistake for such, divert it, give it some other play. Write an essay, pen a character or description,—but not as I do now, with tears trickling down your cheeks.

To be an object of compassion to friends, of derision to foes; to be suspected by strangers, stared at by fools; to be esteemed dull when you cannot be witty, to be applauded for witty when you know that you have been dull; to be called upon for the extemporaneous exercise of that faculty which no premeditation can give; to be spurred on to efforts which end in contempt; to be set on to provoke mirth which procures the procurer hatred; to give pleasure and be paid with squinting malice; to swallow draughts of life-destroying wine which are to be distilled into airy breath to tickle vain auditors; to mortgage miserable morrows for nights of madness; to waste whole seas of time upon those who pay it back in little inconsiderable drops of grudging applause,—are the wages of buffoonery and death.

Time, which has a sure stroke at dissolving all connections which have no solider fastening than this liquid cement, more kind to me than my own taste or penetration, at length opened my eyes to the supposed qualities of my first friends. No trace of them is left but in the vices which they introduced, and the habits they infixed. In them my friends survive still, and exercised ample retribution for any supposed infidelity that I may have been guilty of towards them.

My next more immediate companions were and are persons of such intrinsic and felt worth, that though accidentally their acquaintance has proved pernicious to me, I do not know that if the thing were to do over again, I should have the courage to eschew the mischief at the price of forfeiting the benefit. I came to them reeking from the steams of my late over-heated notions of companionship; and the slightest fuel which they unconsciously afforded, was sufficient to feed my own fires into a propensity.

They were no drinkers; but one from professional habits, and another from a custom derived from his father, smoked tobacco. The devil could not have

devised a more subtle trap to re-take a backsliding penitent. The transition, from gulping down draughts of liquid fire to puffing out innocuous blasts of dry smoke, was so like cheating him. But he is too hard for us when we hope to commute. He beats us at barter; and when we think to set off a new failing against an old infirmity, 'tis odds but he puts the trick upon us of two for one. That (comparatively) white devil of tobacco brought with him in the end seven worse than himself.

It were impertinent to carry the reader through all the processes by which, from smoking at first with malt liquor, I took my degrees through thin wines, through stronger wine and water, through small punch, to those juggling compositions, which, under the name of mixed liquors, slur a great deal of brandy or other poison under less and less water continually, until they come next to none, and so to none at all. But it is hateful to disclose the secrets of my Tartarus.

I should repel my readers, from a mere incapacity of believing me, were I to tell them what tobacco has been to me, the drudging service which I have paid, the slavery which I have vowed to it. How, when I have resolved to quit it, a feeling as of ingratitude has started up; how it has put on personal claims and made the demands of a friend upon me. How the reading of it casually in a book, as where Adam takes his whiff in the chimney-corner of some inn in Joseph Andrews, or Piscator in the Complete Angler breaks his fast upon a morning pipe in that delicate room *Piscatoribus Sacrum*, has in a moment broken down the resistance of weeks. How a pipe was ever in my midnight path before me, till the vision forced me to realize it,—how then its ascending vapours curled, its fragrance lulled, and the thousand delicious ministerings conversant about it, employing every faculty, extracted the sense of pain. How from illuminating it came to darken, from a quick solace it turned to a negative relief, thence to a restlessness and dissatisfaction, thence to a positive misery. How, even now, when the whole secret stands confessed in all its dreadful truth before me, I feel myself linked to it beyond the power of revocation. Bone of my bone——

Persons not accustomed to examine the motives of their actions, to reckon up the countless nails that rivet the chains of habit, or perhaps being bound by none so obdurate as those I have confessed to, may recoil from this as from an overcharged picture. But what short of such a bondage is it, which in spite of protesting friends, a weeping wife, and a reprobating world, chains down many a poor fellow, of no original indisposition to goodness, to his pipe and his pot.

I have seen a print after Correggio, in which three female figures are ministering to a man who sits fast bound at the root of a tree. Sensuality is soothing him, Evil Habit is nailing him to a branch, and Repugnance at the same instant of time is applying a snake to his side. In his face is feeble delight, the recollection of past rather than perception of present pleasures, languid enjoyment of evil with utter imbecility to good, a Sybaritic effeminacy, a submission to bondage, the springs of the will gone down like a broken clock, the sin and the suffering co-instantaneous, or the latter forerunning the former, remorse preceding action—all this represented in one point of time.—When I saw this, I admired the wonderful skill of the painter. But when I went away, I wept, because I thought of my own condition.

Of *that* there is no hope that it should ever change. The waters have gone over me. But out of the black depths, could I be heard I would cry out to all those who have but set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth, to whom the flavour of his first wine is delicious as the opening scenes of life or the entering upon some newly-discovered paradise, look into my desolation, and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when a man shall feel himself going down a precipice with open eyes and a passive will,—to see his destruction and have no power to stop it, and yet to feel it all the way

emanating from himself; to perceive all goodness emptied out of him, and yet not to be able to forget a time when it was otherwise; to bear about the piteous spectacle of his own self-ruin :—could he see my fevered eye, feverish with last night's drinking, and feverishly looking for this night's repetition of the folly; could he feel the body of the death out of which I cry hourly with feebler and feebler outcry to be delivered,—it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation ; to make him clasp his teeth,

and not undo 'em
To suffer WET DAMNATION to run thro' 'em :

Yea, but (methinks I hear somebody object) if sobriety be that fine thing you would have us to understand, if the comforts of a cool brain are to be preferred to that state of heated excitement which you describe and deplore, what hinders in your instance that you do not return to those habits from which you would induce others never to swerve? if the blessing be worth preserving, is it not worth recovering?

*Recovering!*—O if a wish could transport me back to those days of youth, when a draught from the next clear spring could slake any heats which summer suns and youthful exercise had power to stir up in the blood, how gladly would I return to thee, pure element, the drink of children and of child-like holy hermit! In my dreams I can sometimes fancy thy cool refreshment purling over my burning tongue. But my waking stomach rejects it. That which refreshes innocence only makes me sick and faint.

But is there no middle way betwixt total abstinence and the excess which kills you?—For your sake, reader, and that you may never attain to my experience, with pain I must utter the dreadful truth, that there is none, none that I can find. In my stage of habit, (I speak not of habits less confirmed—for some of them I believe the advice to be most prudential,) in the stage which I have reached, to stop short of that measure which is sufficient to draw on torpor and sleep, the benumbing apoplectic sleep of the drunkard, is to have taken none at all. The pain of the self-denial is all one. And what that is, I had rather the reader should believe on my credit, than know from his own trial. He will come to know it, whenever he shall arrive at that state in which, paradoxical as it may appear, *reason shall only visit him through intoxication;* for it is a fearful truth that the intellectual faculties by repeated acts of intemperance may be driven from their orderly sphere of action, their clear daylight ministries, until they shall be brought at last to depend, for the faint manifestation of their departing energies, upon the returning period of the fatal madness to which they owe their devastation. The drinking man is never less himself than during his sober intervals. Evil is so far his good.*

Behold me then, in the robust period of life, reduced to imbecility and decay. Hear me count my gains, and the profits which I have derived from the midnight cup.

Twelve years ago, I was possessed of a healthy frame of mind and body. I was never strong, but, I think my constitution (for a weak one,) was as happily exempt from the tendency to any malady as it was possible to be. I scarce knew what it was to ail anything. Now, except when I am losing myself in a sea of drink, I am never free from those uneasy sensations in head and stomach, which are so much worse to bear than any definite pains or aches.

At that time I was seldom in bed after six in the morning summer and

* When poor M—— painted his last picture, with a pencil in one trembling hand, and a glass of brandy and water in the other, his fingers owed the comparative steadiness with which they were enabled to go through their task in an imperfect manner, to a temporary firmness derived from a repetition of practices, the general effect of which had shaken both them and him so terribly.

winter. I awoke refreshed, and seldom without some merry thoughts in my head, or some piece of a song to welcome the new-born day. Now, the first feeling which besets me, after stretching out the hours of recumbence to their last possible extent, is a forecast of the wearisome day that lies before me, with a secret wish that I could have lain on still, or never awaked.

Life itself, my waking life, has much of the confusion, the trouble, and obscure perplexity, of an ill dream. In the day-time I stumble upon dark mountains.

Business which, though never very particularly adapted to my nature, yet as something of necessity to be gone through, and therefore best undertaken with cheerfulness, I used to enter upon with some degree of alacrity, now wearies, affrights, perplexes me. I fancy all sorts of discouragements, and am ready to give up an occupation which gives me bread, from a harassing conceit of incapacity. The slightest commission given me by a friend, or any small duty which I have to perform for myself, as giving orders to a tradesman, &c., haunts me as a labour impossible to be got through. So much the springs of action are broken.

The same cowardice attends me in all my intercourse with mankind. I dare not promise that a friend's honour, or his cause, would be safe in my keeping, if I were put to the expense of any manly resolution in defending it. So much the springs of moral action are deadened within me.

My favourite occupations in times past now cease to entertain. I can do nothing readily. Application for ever so short a time kills me. This poor abstract of my condition was penned at long intervals, with scarcely an attempt at connexion of thought, which is now difficult to me.

The noble passages which formerly delighted me in history or poetic fiction, now only draw a few tears allied to dotage. My broken and dispirited nature seems to sink before anything great and admirable.

I perpetually catch myself in tears, for any cause, or none. It is inexpressible how much this infirmity adds to a sense of shame, and a general feeling of deterioration.

These are some of the instances, concerning which I can say with truth that it was not always so with me.

Shall I lift up the veil of my weakness any further?—or is this disclosure sufficient?

I am a poor nameless egotist, who have no vanity to consult by these Confessions. I know not whether I shall be laughed at, or heard seriously. Such as they are, I commend them to the reader's attention, if he find his own case any way touched. I have told him what I am come to. Let him stop in time.

[Many are the sayings of Elia, painful and frequent his lucubrations, set forth for the most part (such his modesty!) without a name; scattered about in obscure periodicals and forgotten miscellanies. From the dust of some of these it is our intention occasionally to revive a tract or two that shall seem worthy of a better fate, especially at a time like the present, when the pen of our industrious contributor, engaged in a laborious digest of his recent Continental tour, may happily want the leisure to expatiate in more miscellaneous speculations. We have been induced, in the first instance, to reprint a thing which he put forth in a friend's volume some years since, entitled "The Confessions of a Drunkard," seeing that Messieurs the Quarterly Reviewers have chosen to embellish their last dry pages with fruitful quotations therefrom; adding, from their peculiar brains, the gratuitous affirmation, that they have reason to believe that the describer (in his delineations of a drunkard, forsooth!) partly sat for his own picture. The truth is, that our friend had been reading among the essays of a contemporary, who has perversely been confounded with him, a paper in which Edax (or the Great Eater) humorously complaineth of an inordinate

appetite; and it struck him that a better paper—of deeper interest and wider usefulness—might be made out of the imagined experiences of a Great Drinker. Accordingly he set to work, and with that mock fervour and counterfeit earnestness with which he is too apt to over-realize his descriptions, has given us—a frightful picture indeed, but no more resembling the man Elia than the fictitious Edax may be supposed to identify himself with Mr. L., its author. It is indeed a compound extracted out of his long observations of the effects of drinking upon all the world about him; and this accumulated mass of misery he hath centred (as the custom is with judicious essayists) in a single figure. We deny not that a portion of his own experiences may have passed into the picture (as who, that is not a washy fellow, but must at some time have felt the after-operation of a too generous cup?); but then how heightened! how exaggerated! how little within the sense of the Review, where a part, in their slanderous usage, must be understood to stand for the whole! But it is useless to expostulate with this Quarterly slime, brood of Nilus, watery heads with hearts of jelly, spawned under the sign of Aquarius, incapable of Bacchus, and therefrom cold, washy, spiteful, bloodless. Elia shall string them up one day, and show their colours,—or, rather how colourless and vapid the whole fry,—when he putteth forth his long promised, but unaccountably hitherto delayed, "Confessions of a Water-Drinker."

## Rejoicings upon the New Year's coming of Age.

(*The London Magazine*, January, 1823.)

The *Old Year* being dead, and the *New Year* coming of age, which he does, by Calendar Law, as soon as the breath is out of the old gentleman's body, nothing would serve the young spark but he must give a dinner upon the occasion, to which all the *Days* in the year were invited. The *Festivals*, whom he deputed as his stewards, were mightily taken with the notion. They had been engaged time out of mind, they said, in providing mirth and good cheer for mortals below; and it was time they should have a taste of their own bounty. It was stiffly debated among them, whether the *Fasts* should be admitted. Some said, the appearance of such lean, starved guests, with their mortified faces, would pervert the ends of the meeting. But the objection was over-ruled by *Christmas Day*, who had a design upon *Ash Wednesday* (as you shall hear), and a mighty desire to see how the old Domine would behave himself in his cups. Only the *Vigils* were requested to come with their lanterns, to light the gentlefolks home at night.

All the Days came to their day. Covers were provided for three hundred and sixty-five guests at the principal table; with an occasional knife and fork at the side-board for the *Twenty-Ninth of February*.

I should have told you, that cards of invitation had been issued. The carriers were the *Hours*; twelve little, merry, whirligig foot-pages, as you should desire to see, that went all round, and found out the persons invited well

enough, with the exception of *Easter Day*, *Shrove Tuesday*, and a few such *Movables*, who had lately shifted their quarters.

Well, they all met at last, foul *Days*, fine *Days*, all sorts of *Days*, and a rare din they made of it. There was nothing but, Hail! fellow *Day*,—well met—brother *Day*—sister *Day*,—only *Lady Day* kept a little on the aloof, and seemed somewhat scornful. Yet some said *Twelfth Day* cut her out and out, for she came in a tiffany suit, white and gold, like a queen on a frost-cake, all royal, glittering and *Epiphanous*. The rest came, some in green, some in white—but old *Lent and his family* were not yet out of mourning. Rainy *Days* came in, dripping; and sun-shiny *Days* helped them to change their stockings. *Wedding Day* was there in his marriage finery, a little the worse for wear. *Pay Day* came late, as he always does; and *Dooms-day* sent word—he might be expected.

*April Fool* (as my young lord's jester) took upon himself to marshal the guests, and wild work he made with it. It would have posed old Erra Pater to have found out any given *Day* in the year, to erect a scheme upon—good *Days*, bad *Days*, were so shuffled together, to the confounding of all sober horoscopy.

He had stuck the *Twenty First of June* next to the *Twenty Second of December*, and the former looked like a Maypole siding a marrow-bone. *Ash Wednesday* got wedged in (as was concerted) betwixt *Christmas* and *Lord Mayor's Day*. Lord! how he laid about him! Nothing but barons of beef and turkeys would go down with him—to the great greasing and detriment of his new sackcloth bib and tucker. And still *Christmas Day* was at his elbow, plying him with the wassail-bowl, till he roared, and hiccupped, and protested there was no faith in dried ling, but commended it to the devil for a sour, windy, acrimonious, censorious, hy-po-crit-crit-critical mess, and no dish for a gentleman. Then he dipped his fist into the middle of the great custard that stood before his *left-hand neighbour*, and daubed his hungry beard all over with it, till you would have taken him for the *Last Day in December*, it so hung in icicles.

At another part of the table, *Shrove Tuesday* was helping the *Second of September* to some cock broth,—which courtesy the latter returned with the delicate thigh of a hen pheasant—so there was no love lost for that matter. The *Last of Lent* was spunging upon *Shrovetide's* pancakes; which *April Fool* perceiving, told him he did well, for pancakes were proper to a *good fry-day*.

In another part, a hubbub arose about the *Thirtieth of January*, who it seems, being a sour puritanic character, that thought nobody's meat good or sanctified enough for him, had smuggled into the room a calf's head, which he had had cooked at home for that purpose, thinking to feast thereon incontinently; but as it lay in the dish, *March Manyweathers*, who is a very fine lady, and subject to the megrims, screamed out there was a "human head in the platter," and raved about Herodias's daughter to that degree, that the obnoxious viand was obliged to be removed; nor did she recover her stomach till she had gulped down a *Restorative*, confected of *Oak Apple*, which the merry *Twenty Ninth of May* always carries about with him for that purpose.

The King's health * being called for after this, a notable dispute arose between the *Twelfth of August* (a zealous old Whig gentlewoman) and the *Twenty Third of April* (a new-fangled lady of the Tory stamp), as to which of them should have the honour to propose it. *August* grew hot upon the matter, affirming time out of mind the prescriptive right to have lain with her, till her rival had basely supplanted her; whom she represented as little better than a *kept* mistress, who went about in *fine clothes*, while she (the legitimate BIRTH-DAY) had scarcely a rag, &c.

* The late King.

*April Fool*, being made mediator, confirmed the right in the strongest form of words to the appellant, but decided for peace' sake that the exercise of it should remain with the present possessor. At the same time, he slyly rounded the first lady in the ear, that an action might lie against the Crown for *bi-geny*.

It beginning to grow a little duskish, *Candlemas* lustily bawled out for lights, which was opposed by all the *Days*, who protested against burning daylight. Then fair water was handed round in silver ewers, and the *same lady* was observed to take an unusual time in *Washing* herself.

*May Day*, with that sweetness which is peculiar to her, in a neat speech proposing the health of the founder, crowned her goblet (and by her example the rest of the company) with garlands. This being done, the lordly *New Year* from the upper end of the table, in a cordial but somewhat lofty tone, returned thanks. He felt proud on an occasion of meeting so many of his worthy father's late tenants, promised to improve their farms, and at the same time to abate (if anything was found unreasonable) in their rents.

At the mention of this, the four *Quarter Days* involuntarily looked at each other and smiled; *April Fool* whistled to an old tune of "New Brooms;" and a surly old rebel at the farther end of the table (who was discovered to be no other than the *Fifth of November*) muttered out, distinct enough to be heard by the whole company, words to this effect that "when the old one is gone, he is a fool that looks for a better." Which rudeness of his, the guests resenting, unanimously voted his expulsion; and the mal-content was thrust out neck and heels into the cellar, as the properest place for such a *boutefeu* and firebrand as he had shown himself to be.

Order being restored—the young lord (who to say truth, had been a little ruffled, and put beside his oratory) in as few, and yet as obliging words as possible, assured them of entire welcome; and, with a graceful turn, singling out poor *Twenty Ninth of February*, that had sate all this while mum-chance at the side-board, begged to couple his health with that of the good company before him—which he drank accordingly; observing that he had not seen his honest face any time these four years, with a number of endearing expressions besides. At the same time, removing the solitary *Day* from the forlorn seat which had been assigned him, he stationed him at his own board, somewhere between the *Greek Calends* and *Latter Lammas*.

*Ash Wednesday*, being now called upon for a song, with his eyes fast stuck in his head, and as well as the Canary he had swallowed would give him leave, struck up a Carol, which *Christmas Day* had taught him for the nonce; and was followed by the latter who gave "Miserere" in fine style, hitting off the mumping notes and lengthened drawl of *Old Mortification* with infinite humour. *April Fool* swore they had exchanged conditions; but *Good Friday* was observed to look extremely grave; and *Sunday* held her fan before her face, that she might not be seen to smile.

*Shrovetide, Lord Mayor's Day*, and *April Fool*, next joined in a glee—

Which is the properest day to drink?

in which all the *Days* chiming in made a merry burden.

They next fell to quibbles and conundrums. The question being proposed, who had the greater number of followers—the *Quarter Days* said there could be no question as to that; for they had all the creditors in the world dogging their heels. But *April Fool* gave it in favour of the *Forty Days before Easter;* because the debtors in all cases outnumbered the creditors, and they kept *lent* all the year.

All this while, *Valentine's Day* kept courting pretty *May*, who sate next him, slipping amorous *billets-doux* under the table, till the *Dog Days* (who are

naturally of a warm constitution) began to be jealous, and to bark and rage exceedingly. *April Fool*, who likes a bit of sport above measure, and had some pretensions to the lady besides, as being but a cousin once removed,—clapped and hallooed them on; and as fast as their indignation cooled, those mad wags, the *Ember Days*, were at it with their bellows, to blow it into a flame; and all was in a ferment: till old Madame *Septuagesima* (who boasts herself the *Mother of the Days*) wisely diverted the conversation with a tedious tale of the lovers which she could reckon when she was young; and of one Master *Rogation Day* in particular, who was for ever putting the *question* to her; but she kept him at a distance, as the chronicle would tell—by which I apprehend she meant the Almanack. Then she rambled on to the *Days that were gone*, the *good old Days*, and so to the *Days before the Flood*—which plainly showed her old head to be little better than crazed and doited.

Day being ended, the *Days* called for their cloaks and great-coats, and took their leaves. *Lord Mayor's Day* went off in a Mist, as usual; *Shortest Day* in a deep black Fog, that wrapped the little gentleman all round like a hedge-hog. Two *Vigils*—so watchmen are called in heaven—saw *Christmas Day* safe home—they had been used to the business before. Another *Vigil*—a stout, sturdy patrole, called *Eve of St. Christopher*—seeing *Ash Wednesday* in a condition little better than he should be—e'en whipped him over his shoulders, pick-a-back fashion, and *Old Mortification* went floating home, singing—

On the bat's back do I fly,

and a number of old snatches besides, between drunk and sober, but very few Aves or Penitentiaries (you may believe me) were among them. *Longest Day* set off westward in beautiful crimson and gold—the rest, some in one fashion, some in another; but *Valentine* and pretty *May* took their departure together in one of the prettiest silvery twilights a Lover's Day could wish to set in.

# Old China.

(*The London Magazine*, March, 1823.)

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I inquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture-gallery. I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying, that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china tea-cup.

I like to see my old friends—whom distance cannot diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still—for so we must

in courtesy interpret that speck of deep blue, which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, has made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on tea-cups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the other side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.

Here—a cow and rabbit couchant, and co-extensive—so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old-fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—when a passing sentiment seemed to over-shade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

"I wish the good old times would come again," she said, "when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean, that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state;"—so she was pleased to ramble on,—"in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!) we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

"Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so threadbare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity, with which you flaunted it about in that over-worn suit—your old corbeau—for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings was it?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now.

"When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Leonardo, which we christened the 'Lady

Blanche;' when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money—and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's, and buy a wilderness of Leonardos. Yet do you?

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham, when we had a holiday—holidays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noontide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth—and wish for such another honest hostess, as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a-fishing—and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savourily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now, when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom moreover, we *ride* part of the way—and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome.

"You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the Battle of Hexham, and the Surrender of Calais, and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the Children in the Wood—when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say, that the gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then—and I appeal to you, whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation, than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough,—but there was still a law of civility to women recognized to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat, and the play, afterwards! Now we can only pay our money, and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then—but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.

"There was pleasure in eating strawberries, before they became quite common—in the first dish of peas, while they were yet dear—to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have now? If we were to treat ourselves now—that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is the very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat—when two people living together, as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like; while each apologizes, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never do

make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

"I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet—and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much—or that we had not spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now), we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with 'lusty brimmers' (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr. Cotton*, as you called him), we used to welcome in the 'coming guest.' Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us."

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein, I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of poor—hundred pounds a year. "It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraïd we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened, and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other, if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straiten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth; a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride where we formerly walked: live better and lie softer—and shall be wise to do so—than we had means to do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return—could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a-day—could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them—could the good old one-shilling gallery days return—they are dreams, my cousin, now—but could you and I at this moment, instead of this quiet argument, by our well carpeted fire-side, sitting on this luxurious sofa—be once more struggling up those inconvenient staircases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers—could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours—and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe*, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Crœsus had, or the great Jew R—— is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half-Madonna-ish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house."

# Poor Relations.

(*The London Magazine*, May, 1823.)

A POOR relation—is the most irrelevant thing in nature,—a piece of impertinent correspondency,—an odious approximation,—a haunting conscience,—a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of your prosperity,—an unwelcome remembrancer,—a perpetually recurring mortification,—a drain on your purse,—a more intolerable dun upon your pride,—a drawback upon success,—a rebuke to your rising,—a stain in your blood,—a blot on your 'scutcheon,—a rent in your garment,—a death's head at your banquet,—Agathocles' pot,—a Mordecai in your gate,—a Lazarus at your door,—a lion in your path,—a frog in your chamber,—a fly in your ointment,—a mote in your eye,—a triumph to your enemy,—an apology to your friends,—the one thing not needful,—the hail in harvest,—the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you "That is Mr.——." A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demands, and, at the same time, seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling, and—embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner time—when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company—but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table. He never cometh upon open days, when your wife says with some complacency, "My dear, perhaps Mr.——will drop in to-day." He remembreth birthdays—and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declareth against fish, the turbot being small—yet suffereth himself to be importuned into a slice against his first resolution. He sticketh by the port—yet will be prevailed upon to empty the remainder glass of claret, if a stranger press it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servants, who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think "they have seen him before." Every one speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be—a tide-waiter. He calleth you by your Christian name, to imply that his other is the same with your own. He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had less diffidence. With half the familiarity he might pass for a casual dependent; with more boldness he would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend, yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth up no rent—yet 'tis odds, from his garb and demeanour, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table; refuses on the score of poverty, and—resents being left out. When the company break up, he proffereth to go for a coach—and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather; and will thrust in some mean, and quite unimportant anecdote of—the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as "he is blest in seeing it now." He reviveth past situations, to institute what he calleth—favourable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price of your furniture; and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the urn is the more elegant shape, but, after all, there was something more comfortable about

the old tea-kettle—which you must remember. He dare say you must find a great convenience in having a carriage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet; and did not know till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable; his compliments perverse; his talk a trouble; his stay pertinacious; and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner, as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is—a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other; you may pass him off tolerably well; but your indigent she-relative is hopeless. "He is an old humourist," you may say, "and affects to go threadbare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one." But in the indications of female poverty there can be no disguise. No woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. "She is plainly related to the L——s; or what does she at their house?" She is, in all probability, your wife's cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the case. Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble, and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes—*aliquando sufflaminandas erat*—but there is no raising her. You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped —after the gentlemen. Mr. —— requests the honour of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former—because he does. She calls the servant *Sir;* and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The housekeeper patronizes her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for a harpsichord.

Richard Amlet, Esq., in the play, is a notable instance of the disadvantages, to which this chimerical notion of *affinity constituting a claim to acquaintance*, may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady with a great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old woman, who persists in calling him "her son Dick." But she has wherewithal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface, under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who, wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor W—— was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride; but its quality was inoffensive; it was not of that sort which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a distance; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation in the blue clothes, because I would not thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W—— went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion from the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom. He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer must have walked erect; and in which Hooker, in his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no discommendable vanity. In the depth of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among

books, which insult not; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W—— had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of colleges, had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hopes of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the young man, the determination which at length tore him from academical pursuits for ever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gownsmen and the townsmen, as they are called—the trading part of the latter especially—is carried to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown—insensible to the winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford or be suffocated. He chose the former; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High Street to the back of · · · · · college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him—finding him in a better mood—upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist, which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame, over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity, or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, "knew his mounted sign—and fled." A letter on his father's table the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.

I do not know how, upon a subject which I began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital so eminently painful; but this theme of poor relationship is replete with so much matter for tragic, as well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I received on this matter, are certainly not attended with anything painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was of the essence of gravity; his words few or none; and I was not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so—for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A peculiar sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the days of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows a world ago at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined—and I thought he was the owner of all that money. Awful ideas of the Tower twined themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning; a captive—

a stately being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who, in spite of an habitual general respect which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument, touching their youthful days. The houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill, and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal residence was on the plain; a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses. My father had been a leading Mountaineer; and would still maintain the general superiority, in skill and hardihood, of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys* (so were they called), of which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic—the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out—and bad blood bred; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-commendation of the old Minster; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remember with anguish the thought that came over me: "Perhaps he will never come here again." He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused, with a resistance amounting to rigour—when my aunt, an old Lincolnian, but who had something of this, in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season—uttered the following memorable application—"Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day."—The old gentleman said nothing at the time—but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills me now as I write it—"Woman you are superannuated." John Billet did not survive long after the digesting of this affront; but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored! and, if I remember aright, another pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (Anno 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and a penny, which were found in his escrutoire after his decease, left the world, blessing God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was—a Poor Relation.

# The Child Angel: a Dream.

(*The London Magazine*, June, 1823.)

I CHANCED upon the prettiest, oddest, fantastical thing of a dream the other night, that you shall hear of. I had been reading the "Loves of the Angels," and went to bed with my head full of speculations suggested by that extraordinary legend. It had given birth to innumerable conjectures; and, I

remember, the last waking thought, which I gave expression to on my pillow, was a sort of wonder, "what could come of it."

I was suddenly transported, how or whither I could scarcely make out—but to some celestial region. It was not the real heavens neither—not the downright Bible heaven—but a kind of fairyland heaven, about which a poor human fancy may have leave to sport and air itself, I will hopes without presumption.

Methought—what wild things dreams are!—I was present—at what would you imagine?—at an angel's gossiping.

Whence it came, or how it came, or who bid it come, or whether it came purely of its own head, neither you nor I know—but there lay, sure enough, wrapt in its little cloudy swaddling bands—a Child Angel.

Sun-threads—filmy beams—ran through the celestial napery of what seemed its princely cradle. All the winged orders hovered round, watching when the new-born should open its yet closed eyes; which, when it did, first one, and then the other—with a solicitude and apprehension, yet not such as, stained with fear, dims the expanding eye-lids of mortal infants, but as if to explore its path in those its unhereditary palaces—what an inexhaustible titter that time spared not celestial visages! Nor wanted there to my seeming—O the inexplicable simpleness of dreams!—bowls of that cheering nectar,

—which mortals *caudle* call below—

Nor were wanting faces of female ministrants,—stricken in years, as it might seem,—so dexterous were those heavenly attendants to counterfeit kindly similitudes of earth, to greet, with terrestrial child-rites the young *present*, which earth had made to heaven.

Then were celestial harpings heard, not in full symphony as those by which the spheres are tutored; but, as loudest instruments on earth speaks oftentimes, muffled; so to accommodate their sound the better to the weak ears of the imperfect-born. And, with the noise of those subdued soundings, the Angelet sprang forth, fluttering its rudiments of pinions—but forthwith flagged and was recovered into the arms of those full-winged angels. And a wonder it was to see how, as years went round in heaven—a year in dreams is as a day—continually its white shoulders put forth buds of wings, but, wanting the perfect angelic nutriment, anon was shorn of its aspiring, and fell fluttering—still caught by angel hands—for ever to put forth shoots, and to fall fluttering, because its birth was not of the unmixed vigour of heaven.

And a name was given to the Babe Angel, and it was to be called *Ge-Urania*, because its production was of earth and heaven.

And it could not taste of death, by reason of its adoption into immortal palaces: but it was to know weakness, and reliance, and the shadow of human imbecility; and it went with a lame gait; but in its goings it exceeded all mortal children in grace and swiftness. Then pity first sprang up in angelic bosoms; and yearnings (like the human) touched them at the sight of the immortal lame one.

And with pain did then first those Intuitive Essences, with pain and strife to their natures (not grief), put back their bright intelligences, and reduce their ethereal minds, schooling them to degrees and slower processes, so to adapt their lessons to the gradual illumination (as must needs be) of the half-earth-born; and what intuitive notices they could not repel (by reason that their nature is, to know all things at once), the half-heavenly novice, by the better part of its nature, aspired to receive into its understanding; so that Humility and Aspiration went on even-paced in the instructions of the glorious Amphibium.

But, by reason that Mature Humanity is too gross to breathe the air of that super-subtile region, its portion was, and is, to be a child for ever.

And because the human part of it might not press into the heart and inwards of the palace of its adoption, those full-natured angels tended it by turns in the purlieux of the palace, where were shady groves and rivulets, like this green earth from which it came: so Love, with Voluntary Humility, waited upon the entertainment of the new-adopted.

And myriads of years rolled round (in dreams Time is nothing), and still it kept, and is to keep, perpetual childhood, and is the Tutelar Genius of Childhood upon earth, and still goes lame and lovely.

By the banks of the River Pison is seen, lone-sitting by the grave of the terrestrial Adah, whom the angel Nadir loved, a Child; but not the same which I saw in heaven. A mournful hue overcasts its lineaments; nevertheless, a correspondency is between the child by the grave and that celestial orphan, whom I saw above; and the dimness of the grief upon the heavenly, is as a shadow or emblem of that which stains the beauty of the terrestrial. And this correspondency is not to be understood but by dreams.

And in the archives of heaven I had grace to read, how that once the angel Nadir, being exiled from his place for mortal passion, upspringing on the wings of parental love (such power had parental love for a moment to suspend the else-irrevocable law) appeared for a brief instant in his station; and, depositing a wondrous Birth, straightway disappeared, and the palaces knew him no more. And this charge was the self-same Babe, who goeth lame and lovely—but Adah sleepeth by the river Pison.

# The Old Margate Hoy.

(*The London Magazine*, July, 1823.)

I AM fond of passing my vacations (I believe I have said so before) at one or other of the Universities. Next to these my choice would fix me at some woody spot, such as the neighbourhood of Henley affords in abundance, upon the banks of my beloved Thames. But somehow or other my cousin contrives to wheedle me once in three or four seasons to a watering-place. Old attachments cling to her in spite of experience. We have been dull at Worthing one summer, duller at Brighton another, dullest at Eastbourne a third, and are at this moment doing dreary penance at—Hastings!—and all because we were happy many years ago for a brief week at—Margate. That was our first sea-side experiment, and many circumstances combined to make it the most agreeable holiday of my life. We had neither of us seen the sea, and we had never been from home so long together in company.

Can I forget thee, thou old Margate Hoy, with thy weather-beaten, sunburnt captain, and his rough accommodations—ill exchanged for the foppery and fresh-water niceness of the modern steam-packet? To the winds and waves thou committedst thy goodly freightage, and didst ask no aid of magic fumes, and spells, and boiling cauldrons. With the gales of heaven thou wentest swimmingly; or, when it was their pleasure, stoodest still with sailor-like patience. Thy course was natural, not forced, as in a hotbed; nor didst thou go poisoning the breath of ocean with sulphureous smoke—a great sea-chimera,

chimneying and furnacing the deep; or liker to that fire-god parching up Scamander.

Can I forget thy honest, yet slender crew, with their coy reluctant responses (yet to the suppression of anything like contempt) to the raw questions, which we of the great city would be ever and anon putting to them, as to the uses of this or that strange naval implement? 'Specially can I forget thee, thou happy medium, thou shade of refuge between us and them, conciliating interpreter of their skill to our simplicity, comfortable ambassador between sea and land!—whose sailor-trousers did not more convincingly assure thee to be an adopted denizen of the former, than thy white cap, and whiter apron over them, with thy neat-fingered practice in thy culinary vocation, bespoke thee to have been of inland nurture heretofore—a master cook of Eastcheap? How busily didst thou ply thy multifarious occupation, cook, mariner, attendant, chamberlain; here, there, like another Ariel, flaming at once about all parts of the deck, yet with kindlier ministrations—not toa ssist the tempest, but, as if touched with a kindred sense of our infirmities, to soothe the qualms which that untried motion might haply raise in our crude land-fancies. And when the o'er-washing billows drove us below deck (for it was far gone in October, and we had stiff and blowing weather) how did thy officious ministerings, still catering for our comfort, with cards, and cordials, and thy more cordial conversation, alleviate the closeness and the confinement of thy else (truth to say) not very savoury, nor very inviting, little cabin!

With these additaments to boot, we had on board a fellow-passenger, whose discourse in verity might have beguiled a longer voyage than we meditated, and have made mirth and wonder abound as far as the Azores. He was a dark, Spanish complexioned young man, remarkably handsome, with an officer-like assurance, and an insuppressible volubility of assertion. He was, in fact, the greatest liar I had met with then, or since. He was none of your hesitating, half story-tellers (a most painful description of mortals) who go on sounding your belief, and only giving you as much as they see you can swallow at a time—the nibbling pickpockets of your patience—but one who committed downright, daylight depredations upon his neighbour's faith. He did not stand shivering upon the brink, but was a hearty thorough-paced liar, and plunged at once into the depths of your credulity. I partly believe, he made pretty sure of his company. Not many rich, not many wise, or learned, composed at that time the common stowage of a Margate packet. We were, I am afraid, a set of as unseasoned Londoners (let our enemies give it a worse name) as Aldermanbury, or Watling Street, at that time of day could have supplied. There might be an exception or two among us, but I scorn to make any invidious distinctions among such a jolly, companionable ship's company, as those were whom I sailed with. Something too must be conceded to the *Genius Loci*. Had the confident fellow told us half the legends on land, which he favoured us with on the other element, I flatter myself the good sense of most of us would have revolted. But we were in a new world, with everything unfamiliar about us, and the time and place disposed us to the reception of any prodigious marvel whatsoever. Time has obliterated from my memory much of his wild fablings; and the rest would appear but dull, as written, and to be read on shore. He had been Aide-de-camp (among other rare accidents and fortunes) to a Persian prince, and at one blow had stricken off the head of the King of Carimania on horseback. He, of course, married the Prince's daughter. I forget what unlucky turn in the politics of that court, combining with the loss of his consort, was the reason of his quitting Persia; but with the rapidity of a magician he transported himself, along with his hearers, back to England, where we still found him in the confidence of great ladies. There was some story of a Princess—Elizabeth, if I remember—having intrusted to his care an extraordinary casket of jewels, upon some extraordinary occasion—

but as I am not certain of the name or circumstances at this distance of time, I must leave it to the Royal daughters of England to settle the honour among themselves in private. I cannot call to mind half his pleasant wonders; but I perfectly remember, that in the course of his travels he had seen a phœnix; and he obligingly undeceived us of the vulgar error, that there is but one of that species at a time, assuring us that they were not uncommon in some parts of Upper Egypt. Hitherto he had found the most implicit listeners. His dreaming fancies had transported us beyond the "ignorant present." But when (still hardying more and more in his triumphs over our simplicity) he went on to affirm that he had actually sailed through the legs of the Colossus at Rhodes, it really became necessary to make a stand. And here I must do justice to the good sense and intrepidity of one of our party, a youth, that had hitherto been one of his most deferential auditors, who, from his recent reading, made bold to assure the gentleman, that there must be some mistake, as "the Colossus in question had been destroyed long since:" to whose opinion, delivered with all modesty, our hero was obliging enough to concede thus much, that "the figure was indeed a little damaged." This was the only opposition he met with, and it did not at all seem to stagger him, for he proceeded with his fables, which the same youth appeared to swallow with still more complacency than ever,—confirmed, as it were, by the extreme candour of that concession. With these prodigies he wheedled us on till we came in sight of the Reculvers, which one of our own company (having been the voyage before) immediately recognizing, and pointing out to us, was considered by us as no ordinary seaman.

All this time sat upon the edge of the deck quite a different character. It was a lad, apparently very poor, very infirm, and very patient. His eye was ever on the sea, with a smile: and, if he caught now and then some snatches of these wild legends, it was by accident, and they seemed not to concern him. The waves to him whispered more pleasant stories. He was as one, being with us, but not of us. He heard the bell of dinner ring without stirring; and when some of us pulled out our private stores—our cold meat and our salads—he produced none, and seemed to want none. Only a solitary biscuit he had laid in; provision for the one or two days and nights, to which these vessels then were oftentimes obliged to prolong their voyage. Upon a nearer acquaintance with him, which he seemed neither to court nor decline, we learned that he was going to Margate, with the hope of being admitted into the Infirmary there for sea-bathing. His disease was a scrofula, which appeared to have eaten all over him. He expressed great hopes of a cure; and when we asked him, whether he had any friends where he was going, he replied, "he *had* no friends."

These pleasant, and some mournful passages, with the first sight of the sea, co-operating with youth, and a sense of holidays, and out-of-door adventure, to me that had been pent up in populous cities for many months before,—have left upon my mind the fragrance as of summer days gone by, bequeathing nothing but their remembrance for cold and wintry hours to chew upon.

Will it be thought a digression (it may spare some unwelcome comparisons), if I endeavour to account for the *dissatisfaction* which I have heard so many persons confess to have felt (as I did myself feel in part on this occasion), *at the sight of the sea for the first time?* I think the reason usually given—referring to the incapacity of actual objects for satisfying our preconceptions of them—scarcely goes deep enough into the question. Let the same person see a lion an elephant, a mountain, for the first time in his life, and he shall perhaps feel himself a little mortified. The things do not fill up that space, which the idea of them seemed to take up in his mind. But they have still a correspondency to his first notion, and in time grow up to it, so as to produce a very similar impression: enlarging themselves (if I may say so) upon familiarity. But the

sea remains a disappointment.—Is it not, that in *the latter* we had expected to behold (absurdly, I grant, but, I am afraid, by the law of imagination unavoidably) not a definite object, as those wild beasts, or that mountain compassable by the eye, but *all the sea at once*, THE COMMENSURATE ANTAGONIST OF THE EARTH? I do not say we tell ourselves so much, but the craving of the mind is to be satisfied with nothing less. I will suppose the case of a young person of fifteen (as I then was) knowing nothing of the sea, but from description. He comes to it for the first time—all that he has been reading of it all his life, and *that* the most enthusiastic part of life,—all he has gathered from narratives of wandering seamen; what he has gained from true voyages, and what he cherishes as credulously from romance and poetry; crowding their images, and exacting strange tributes from expectation.—He thinks of the great deep, and of those who go down unto it; of its thousand isles, and of the vast continents it washes; of its receiving the mighty Plata, or Orellana, into its bosom, without disturbance, or sense of augmentation; of Biscay swells, and the mariner

> For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
> Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape;

of fatal rocks, and the "still-vexed Bermoothes;" of great whirlpools, and the water-spout; of sunken ships, and sumless treasures swallowed up in the unrestoring depths: of fishes and quaint monsters, to which all that is terrible on earth—

> Be but as bugs to frighten babes withal,
> Compared with the creatures in the sea's entral;

of naked savages, and Juan Fernandez; of pearls, and shells; of coral beds, and of enchanted isles; of mermaids' grots—

I do not assert that in sober earnest he expects to be shown all these wonders at once, but he is under the tyranny of a mighty faculty, which haunts him with confused hints and shadows of all these; and when the actual object opens first upon him, seen (in tame weather too most likely) from our unromantic coasts—a speck, a slip of sea-water, as it shows to him—what can it prove but a very unsatisfying and even diminutive entertainment? Or if he has come to it from the mouth of a river, was it much more than the river widening? and, even out of sight of land, what had he but a flat watery horizon about him, nothing comparable to the vast o'er-curtaining sky, his familiar object, seen daily without dread or amazement?—Who, in similar circumstances, has not been tempted to exclaim with Charobá, in the poem of Gebir,—

> Is this the mighty ocean?—is this *all?*

I love town, or country; but this detestable Cinque Port is neither. I hate these scrubbed shoots, thrusting out their starved foliage from between the horrid fissures of dusty innutritious rocks; which the amateur calls "verdure to the edge of the sea." I require woods, and they show me stunted coppices. I cry out for the water-brooks, and pant for fresh streams, and inland murmurs. I cannot stand all day on the naked beach, watching the capricious hues of the seas, shifting like the colours of a dying mullet. I am tired of looking out at the windows of this island-prison. I would fain retire into the interior of my cage. While I gaze upon the sea, I want to be on it, over it, across it. It binds me in with chains, as of iron. My thoughts are abroad. I should not so feel in Staffordshire. There is no home for me here. There is no sense of home at Hastings. It is a place of fugitive resort, an heterogeneous assemblage of sea-mews and stockbrokers, Amphitrites of the town, and misses that coquet with the Ocean. If it were what it was in its primitive shape, and what it ought to have remained, a fair honest fishing-town, and no

more, it were something—with a few straggling fishermen's huts scattered about, artless as its cliffs, and with their materials filched from them, it were something. I could abide to dwell with Meschek; to assort with fisher-swains, and smugglers. There are, or I dream there are, many of this latter occupation here. Their faces become the place. I like a smuggler. He is the only honest thief. He robs nothing but the revenue,—an abstraction I never greatly cared about. I could go out with them in their mackerel boats, or about their less ostensible business, with some satisfaction. I can even tolerate those poor victims to monotony, who from day to day pace along the beach, in endless progress and recurrence, to watch their illicit countrymen—townsfolk or brethren perchance—whistling to the sheathing and unsheathing of their cutlass (their only solace), who under the mild name of preventive service, keep up a legitimated civil warfare in the deplorable absence of a foreign one, to show their detestation of run hollands, and zeal for old England. But it is the visitants from town that come here to *say* that they have been here, with no more relish of the sea than a pond perch, or a dace might be supposed to have, that are my aversion. I feel like a foolish dace in these regions, and have as little toleration for myself here, as for them. What can they want here? if they had a true relish of the ocean, why have they brought all this land luggage with them? or why pitch their civilized tents in the desert? What mean these scanty book-rooms—marine libraries as they entitle them—if the sea were, as they would have us believe, a book "to read strange matter in?" what are their foolish concert-rooms, if they come, as they would fain be thought to do, to listen to the music of the waves. All is false and hollow pretension. They come, because it is the fashion, and to spoil the nature of the place. They are mostly, as I have said, stockbrokers; but I have watched the better sort of them—now and then, an honest citizen—of the old stamp), in the simplicity of his heart, shall bring down his wife and daughters, to taste the sea breezes. I always know the date of their arrival. It is easy to see it in their countenance. A day or two they go wandering on the shingles, picking up cockle-shells, and thinking them great things; but, in a poor week, imagination slackens: they begin to discover that cockles produce no pearls, and then—O then!—if I could interpret for the pretty creatures (I know they have not the courage to confess it themselves) how gladly would they exchange their sea-side rambles for a Sunday walk on the green-sward of their accustomed Twickenham meadows!

I would ask one of these sea-charmed emigrants, who think they truly love the sea, with its wild usages, what would their feelings be, if some of the unsophisticated aborigines of this place, encouraged by their courteous questionings here, should venture, on the faith of such assured sympathy between them, to return the visit, and come up to see—London. I must imagine them with their fishing-tackle on their back, as we carry our town necessaries. What a sensation would it cause in Lothbury! What vehement laughter would it not excite among

The daughters of Cheapside, and wives of Lombard Street!

I am sure that no town-bred, or inland-born subjects, can feel their true and natural nourishment at these sea-places. Nature, where she does not mean us for mariners and vagabonds, bids us stay at home. The salt foam seems to nourish a spleen. I am not half so good-natured as by the milder waters of my natural river. I would exchange these sea-gulls for swans, and scud a swallow for ever about the banks of Thamesis.

# Some Sonnets of Sir Philip Sydney.

(*The London Magazine*, September, 1823.)

["W. H.," who is spoken of towards the close of this essay, was Elia's old friend, William Hazlitt, the critic.]

SYDNEY'S Sonnets—I speak of the best of them—are among the very best of their sort. They fall below the plain moral dignity, the sanctity, and high yet modest spirit of self-approval, of Milton in his compositions of a similar structure. They are in truth what Milton, censuring the Arcadia, says of that work (to which they are a sort of after-tune or application), "vain and amatorious" enough, yet the things in their kind (as he confesses to be true of the romance) may be "full of worth and wit." They savour of the courtier, it must be allowed, and not of the Commonwealthsman. But Milton was a courtier when he wrote the Masque at Ludlow Castle, and still more a courtier when he composed the Arcades. When the national struggle was to begin, he becomingly cast these vanities behind him; and if the order of time had thrown Sir Philip upon the crisis which preceded the Revolution, there is no reason why he should not have acted the same part in that emergency, which has glorified the name of a later Sydney. He did not want plain for plainness or boldness of spirit. His letter on the French match may testify, he could speak his mind freely to Princes. The times did not call him to the scaffold.

The Sonnets which we oftenest call to mind of Milton were the compositions of his maturest years. Those of Sydney, which I am about to produce, were written in the very heyday of his blood. They were struck full of amorous fancies—far-fetched conceits, befitting his occupation; for True Love thinks no labour to send out Thoughts upon the vast, and more than Indian voyages, to bring home rich pearls, outlandish wealth, gums, jewels, spicery, to sacrifice in self-depreciating similitudes, as shadows of true amiabilities in the Beloved. We must be Lovers—or at least the cooling touch of time, the *circum præcordia frigus*, must not have so damped our faculties, as to take away our recollection that we were once so—before we can duly appreciate the glorious vanities, and graceful hyperboles, of the passion. The images which lie before our feet (though by some accounted the only natural) are least natural for the high Sydnean love to express its fancies by. They may serve for the loves of Tibullus, or the dear Author of the Schoolmistress; for passions that creep and whine in Elegies and Pastoral Ballads. I am sure Milton never loved at this rate. I am afraid some of his addresses (*ad Leonoram*, I mean) have rather erred on the farther side; and that the poet came not much short of a religious indecorum, when he could thus apostrophize a singing-girl:—

> Angelus unicuique suus (sic credite gentes)
> Obtigit ætheriis ales ab ordinibus.
> Quid mirum, Leonora, tibi si gloria major,
> Nam tua præsentem vox sonat ipsa Deum?
> Aut Deus, aut vacui certè mens tertia cœli
> Per tua secretò guttura serpit agens;
> Serpit agens, facilisque docet mortalia corda
> Sensim immortali assuescere posse sono.
> QUOD SI CUNCTA QUIDEM DEUS EST PER CUNCTAQUE FUSUS,
> IN TE UNA LOQUITUR, CETERA MUTUS HABET.

This is loving in a strange fashion; and it requires some candour of con-

struction (besides the slight darkening of a dead language) to cast a veil over the ugly appearance of something very like blasphemy in the last two verses. I think the Lover would have been staggered, if he had gone about to express the same thought in English. I am sure, Sydney has no flights like this. His extravaganzas do not strike at the sky, though he takes leave to adopt the pale Dian into a fellowship with his mortal passions. "With how sad steps, O Moon," &c.—The last line of his poem—"Do they call *virtue* there—*ungratefulness?*"—is a little obscured by transposition. He means, Do they call ungratefulness there a virtue?

[After giving, here, eleven of Sir Philip Sydney's Sonnets, Elia goes on to say.]

Of the foregoing, the first—"Come, Sleep, O Sleep," &c.—the second—"The curious wits," &c.—and the last sonnet—"Highway, since you," &c.—are my favourites. But the general beauty of them all is, that they are so perfectly characteristical. The spirit of "learning and of chivalry,"—of which union, Spenser has entitled Sydney to have been the "president,"—shines through them. I confess I can see nothing of the "jejune" or "frigid" in them; much less of the "stiff" and "cumbrous"—which I have sometimes heard objected to the Arcadia. The verse runs off swiftly and gallantly. It might have been tuned to the trumpet; or tempered (as himself expresses it) to "trampling horses' feet." They abound in felicitous phrases—"O heavenly Fool, thy most kiss-worthy face": *8th* Sonnet.—"Sweet pillows, sweetest bed; a chamber deaf to noise, and blind to light": *2nd* Sonnet.—"That sweet enemy,—France": *5th* Sonnet.

But they are not rich in words only, in vague and unlocalized feelings—the failing too much of some poetry of the present day—they are full, material, and circumstantiated. Time and place appropriated every one of them. It is not a fever of passion wasting itself upon a thin diet of dainty words, but a transcendent passion pervading and illuminating action, pursuits, studies, feats of arms, the opinions of contemporaries and his judgment of them. An historical thread runs through them, which almost fixes a date to them; marks the *when* and *where* they were written.

I have dwelt the longer upon what I conceive the merit of these poems, because I have been hurt by the wantonness (I wish I could treat it by a gentler name) with which W. H. takes every occasion of insulting the memory of Sir Philip Sydney. But the decisions of the Author of Table Talk, &c. (most profound and subtle where they are, as for the most part, just), are more safely to be relied upon, on subjects and authors he has a partiality for, than on such as he has conceived an accidental prejudice against. Milton wrote Sonnets, and was a king-hater; and it was congenial perhaps to sacrifice a courtier to a patriot. But I was unwilling to lose a *fine idea* from my mind. The noble images, passions, sentiments, and poetical delicacies of character, scattered all over the Arcadia (spite of some stiffness and encumberment), justify to me the character which his contemporaries have left us of the writer. I cannot think with the critic, that Sir Philip Sydney was that *opprobrious thing* which a foolish nobleman in his insolent hostility chose to term him. I call to mind the epitaph made on him, to guide me to juster thoughts of him; and I repose upon the beautiful lines in the "Friend's Passion for his Astrophel," printed with the Elegies of Spenser and others—"You knew—who knew not Astrophel?" &c.

Or let any one read the deeper sorrows (grief running into rage) in the Poem,—the last in the collection accompanying the above,—from which internal testimony I believe to be Lord Brooke's,—beginning with "Silence augmenteth grief,"—and then seriously ask himself, whether the subject of such absorbing and confounding regrets could have been *that thing* which Lord Oxford termed him.

# The Tombs in the Abbey.

(*The London Magazine*, October, 1823.)

[When originally published in the *London*, this paper appeared as a letter formally addressed "To Robert Southey, Esq." It was afterwards compacted from an epistle into an essay, by the striking out of the passages here restored and as usual carefully bracketed. This severe remonstrance was provoked by an article of Southey's in the *Quarterly*, for the January of 1823, on the "Progress of Infidelity," in the course of which Elia was pained to find his old friend, alluding by name to his essays, apropos to the one on Witches and other Night Fears, as "a book which only wants a sounder religious feeling, to be as delightful as it is original." It was this unexpected onslaught that provoked Charles Lamb to the following pungent retaliation. The result of the contest was a brief estrangement, the two old friends, on Southey's next coming up to London, being readily, however, and, as the sequel proved, lastingly reconciled. Elia's intimates, here referred to under initials, are easily identified. "C." was the Rev. Henry Francis Cary, translator of the *Divina Commedia*; "Allan C." Allan Cunningham; "P——r" Bryan Waller Procter, otherwise Barry Cornwall; "A——p" Thomas Allsopp; "G——n" Gilman; "W——th" William Wordsworth; "L. H." Leigh Hunt; "T. H." Leigh Hunt's eldest son Thornton; "H. C. R." Henry Crabb Robinson; "W. A." William Ayrton; and "W. H." William Hazlitt.]

[Sir,—You have done me an unfriendly office, without perhaps much considering what you were doing. You have given an ill name to my poor lucubrations. In a recent paper on Infidelity, you usher in a conditional commendation of them with an exception; which, preceding the encomium, and taking up nearly the same space with it, must impress your readers with the notion, that the objectionable parts in them are at least equal in quantity to the pardonable. The censure is in fact the criticism; the praise—a concession merely. Exceptions usually follow, to qualify praise or blame. But there stands your reproof, in the very front of your notice, in ugly characters, like some bugbear, to frighten all good Christians from purchasing. Through you I become an object of suspicion to preceptors of youth, and fathers of families. "*A book which wants only a sounder religious feeling, to be as delightful as it is original.*" With no further explanation, what must your readers conjecture, but that my little volume is some vehicle for heresy or infidelity? The quotation, which you honour me by subjoining, oddly enough, is of a character which bespeaks a temperament in the writer the very reverse of *that* your reproof goes to insinuate. Had you been taxing me with superstition, the passage would have been pertinent to the censure. Was it worth your while to go so far out of your way to affront the feelings of an old friend, and commit yourself by an irrelevant quotation, for the pleasure of reflecting upon a poor child, an exile at Genoa?

I am at a loss what particular essay you had in view (if my poor ramblings amount to that appellation) when you were in such a hurry to thrust in your objection, like bad news, foremost.—Perhaps the paper on "Saying Graces" was the obnoxious feature. I have endeavoured there to rescue a voluntary

duty—good in place, but never, as I remember, literally commanded—from the charge of an undecent formality. Rightly taken, sir, that paper was not against graces, but want of grace; not against the ceremony, but the carelessness and slovenliness so often observed in the performance of it.

Or was it *that* on the "New Year"—in which I have described the feelings of the merely natural man, on a consideration of the amazing change, which is supposable to take place on our removal from this fleshly scene? If men would honestly confess their misgivings (which few men will) there are times when the strongest Christian of us, I believe, has reeled under questions of such staggering obscurity. I do not accuse you of this weakness. There are some who tremblingly reach out shaking hands to the guidance of Faith—others who stoutly venture into the dark (their Human Confidence their leader, whom they mistake for Faith); and, investing themselves beforehand with cherubic wings, as they fancy, find their new robes as familiar, and fitting to their supposed growth and stature in godliness, as the coat they left off yesterday—some whose hope totters upon crutches—others who stalk into futurity upon stilts.

The contemplation of a Spiritual World,—which, without the addition of a misgiving conscience, is enough to shake some natures to their foundation—is smoothly got over by others, who shall float over the black billows in their little boat of No-Distrust, as unconcernedly as over a summer sea. The difference is chiefly constitutional.

One man shall love his friends and his friends' faces; and, under the uncertainty of conversing with them again, in the same manner and familiar circumstances of sight, speech, &c., as upon earth—in a moment of no irreverent weakness—for a dream-while—no more—would be almost content, for a reward of a life of virtue (if he could ascribe such acceptance to his lame performances), to take up his portion with those he loved, and was made to love, in this good world, which he knows—which was created so lovely, beyond his deservings. Another, embracing a more exalted vision—so that he might receive indefinite additaments of power, knowledge, beauty, glory, &c.—is ready to forego the recognition of humbler individualities of earth, and the old familiar faces. The shapings of our heavens are the modifications of our constitutions; and Mr. Feeble Mind, or Mr. Great Heart, is born in every one of us.

Some (and such have been accounted the safest divines) have shrunk from pronouncing upon the final state of any man; nor dare they pronounce the case of Judas to be desperate. Others (with stronger optics), as plainly as with the eye of flesh, shall behold a *given king* in bliss, and a *given chamberlain* in torment; even to the eternizing of a cast of the eye in the latter, his own self-mocked and good-humouredly-borne deformity on earth, but supposed to aggravate the uncouth and hideous expression of his pangs in the other place. That one man can presume so far, and that another would with shuddering disclaim such confidences, is, I believe, an effect of the nerves purely.

If, in either of these papers, or elsewhere, I have been betrayed into some levities—not affronting the sanctuary, but glancing perhaps at some of the outskirts and extreme edges, the debateable land between the holy and profane regions—(for the admixture of man's inventions, twisting themselves with the name of religion itself has artfully made it difficult to touch even the alloy, without, in some men's estimation, soiling the fine gold)—if I have sported within the purlieux of serious matter—it was, I dare say, a humour—be not startled, sir,—which I have unwittingly derived from yourself. You have all your life been making a jest of the devil. Not of the scriptural meaning of that dark essence—personal or allegorical; for the nature is nowhere plainly delivered. I acquit you of intentional irreverence. But indeed you have made wonderfully free with, and been mighty pleasant upon, the popular idea and attributes of him. A Noble Lord, your brother Visionary,

has scarcely taken greater liberties with the material keys, and merely Catholic notion of St. Peter. You have flattered him in prose: you have chanted him in goodly odes. You have been his Jester; volunteer Laureate, and self-elected Court Poet to Beelzebub.

You have never ridiculed, I believe, what you thought to be religion, but you are always girding at what some pious, but perhaps mistaken folks, think to be so. For this reason, I am sorry to hear that you are engaged upon a life of George Fox. I know you will fall into the error of intermixing some comic stuff with your seriousness. The Quakers tremble at the subject in your hands. The Methodists are as shy of you, upon account of *their* founder. But, above all, our Popish brethren are most in your debt. The errors of that Church have proved a fruitful source to your scoffing vein. Their Legend has been a Golden one to you. And here your friends, sir, have noticed a notable inconsistency. To the imposing rites, the solemn penances, devout austerities of that communion; the affecting though erring piety of their hermits; the silence and solitude of the Chartreux—their crossings, their holy waters—their Virgin, and their saints—to these, they say, you have been indebted for the best feelings, and the richest imagery, of your epic poetry. You have drawn copious drafts upon Loretto. We thought at one time you were going post to Rome—but that in the facetious commentaries, which it is your custom to append so plentifully, and (some say) injudiciously, to your loftiest performances in this kind, you spurn the uplifted toe, which you but just now seemed to court; leave his holiness in the lurch; and show him a fair pair of Protestant heels under your Romish vestment. When we think you already at the wicket, suddenly a violent cross wind blows you transverse—

> "Ten thousand leagues awry———
> ——— Then might we see
> Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost
> And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
> Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
> The sport of winds."

You pick up pence by showing the hallowed bones, shrine, and crucifix; and you take money a second time by exposing the trick of them afterwards. You carry your verse to Castle Angelo for sale in a morning; and, swifter than a pedlar can transmute his pack, you are at Canterbury with your prose ware before night.

Sir, is it that I dislike you in this merry vein? The very reverse. No countenance becomes an intelligent jest better than your own. It is your grave aspect, when you look awful upon your poor friends, which I would deprecate.

In more than one place, if I mistake not, you have been pleased to compliment me at the expense of my companions. I cannot accept your compliment at such a price. The upbraiding a man's poverty naturally makes him look about him to see whether he be so poor indeed as he is presumed to be. You have put me upon counting my riches. Really, sir, I did not know I was so wealthy in the article of friendships. There is ——, and ——, whom you never heard of, but exemplary characters both, and excellent church-goers; and Norris, mine and my father's friend for nearly half a century; and the enthusiasts for Wordsworth's poetry, ——, a little tainted with Socinianism it is to be feared, but constant in his attachments, and a capital critic; and ——, a sturdy old Athanasian, so that sets all to rights again; and Wainwright, the light, and warm-as-light-hearted, Janus of the *London;* and the translator of Dante, still a curate, modest and amiable C.; and Allen C., the large-hearted Scot; and P——r, candid and affectionate as his own poetry; and A——p, Coleridge's friend; and G——n, his more than friend; and Coleridge himself, the same to me still, as in those old evenings, when we used to sit and speculate (do you

remember them, sir?) at our old Salutation tavern, upon Pantisocracy and golden days to come on earth; and W——th (why, sir, I might drop my rent-roll here, such goodly farms and manors have I reckoned up already. In what possession has not this last name alone estated me?—but I will go on)—and Monkhouse, the noble-minded kinsman, by wedlock, of W——th; and H. C. R., unwearied in the offices of a friend; and Clarkson, almost above the narrowness of that relation, yet condescending not seldom heretofore from the labours of his world-embracing charity to bless my humble roof; and the gall-less and single-minded Dyer; and the high-minded associate of Cook, the veteran Colonel, with his lusty heart still sending cartels of defiance to old Time; and, not least, W. A., the last and steadiest left to me of that little knot of whist-players, that used to assemble weekly, for so many years, at the Queen's Gate (you remember them, sir?) and called Admiral Burney friend.

I will come to the point at once. I believe you will not make many exceptions to my associates so far. But I have purposely omitted some intimacies, which I do not yet repent of having contracted, with two gentlemen diametrically opposed to yourself in principles. You will understand me to allude to the authors of "Rimini" and of the "Table Talk." And first of the former.

It is an error more particularly incident to persons of the correctest principles and habits, to seclude themselves from the rest of mankind, as from another species, and form into knots and clubs. The best people herding thus exclusively are in danger of contracting a narrowness. Heat and cold, dryness and moisture, in the natural world, do not fly asunder, to split the globe into sectarian parts and separations; but mingling, as they best may, correct the malignity of any single predominance. The analogy holds, I suppose, in the moral world. If all the good people were to ship themselves off to Terra Incognita, what, in humanity's name, is to become of the refuse? If the persons, whom I have chiefly in view, have not pushed matters to this extremity yet, they carry them as far as they can go. Instead of mixing with the infidel and the freethinker—in the room of opening a negotiation, to try at least to find out at which gate the error entered—they huddle close together, in a weak fear of infection, like that pusillanimous underling in Spenser—

> "This is the wandering wood, this Error's den;
> A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
> Therefore, I rede, beware." fly, quoth then
> The fearful Dwarf.

And, if they be writers in orthodox journals, addressing themselves only to the irritable passions of the unbeliever—they proceed in a safe system of strengthening the strong hands, and confirming the valiant knees; of converting the already converted, and proselyting their own party. I am the more convinced of this from a passage in the very treatise which occasioned this letter. It is where, having recommended to the doubter the writings of Michaelis and Lardner, you ride triumphantly over the necks of all infidels, sceptics, and dissenters, from this time to the world's end, upon the wheels of two unanswerable deductions. I do not hold it meet to set down, in a miscellaneous compilation like this, such religious words as you have thought fit to introduce into the pages of a petulant literary journal. I therefore beg leave to substitute *numerals*, and refer to the *Quarterly Review* (for January) for filling of them up. "Here," say you, "as in the history of 7, if these books are authentic, the events which they relate must be true; if they were written by 8, 9 is 10 and 11." Your first deduction, if it means honestly, rests upon two identical propositions; though I suspect an unfairness in one of the terms, which this would not be quite the proper place for explicating. At all events, *you* have no cause to triumph; you have not been proving the premises, but

refer for satisfaction therein to very long and laborious works, which may well employ the sceptic a twelvemonth or two to digest, before he can possibly be ripe for your conclusion. When he has satisfied himself about the premises, he will concede to you the inference, I dare say, most readily.—But your latter deduction, viz., that because 8 has written a book concerning 9, therefore 10 and 11 was certainly his meaning, is one of the most extraordinary conclusions *per saltum,* that I have had the good fortune to meet with. As far as 10 is verbally asserted in the writings, all sects must agree with you; but you cannot be ignorant of the many various ways in which the doctrine of the . . . . . . has been understood, from a low figurative expression (with the Unitarians) up to the most mysterious actuality; in which highest sense alone you and your church take it. And for 11, that there is *no other possible conclusion*—to hazard this in the face of so many thousands of Arians and Socinians, &c., who have drawn so opposite a one, is such a piece of theological hardihood, as, I think, warrants me in concluding that, when you sit down to pen theology, you do not at all consider your opponents, but have in your eye, merely and exclusively, readers of the same way of thinking with yourself, and therefore have no occasion to trouble yourself with the quality of the logic to which you treat them.

Neither can I think, if you had had the welfare of the poor child—over whose hopeless condition you whine so lamentably (and I must think) unseasonably—seriously at heart, that you could have taken the step of sticking him up *by name*—T. H. is as good as *naming* him—to perpetuate an outrage upon the parental feelings, as long as the *Quarterly Review* shall last. Was it necessary to specify an individual case, and give to Christian compassion the appearance of a personal attack? Is this the way to conciliate unbelievers, or not rather to widen the breach irreparably?

I own I could never think so considerably of myself as to decline the society of an agreeable or worthy man upon difference of opinion only. The impediments and the facilitations to a sound belief are various and inscrutable as the heart of man. Some believe upon weak principles; others cannot feel the efficacy of the strongest. One of the most candid, most upright, and single-meaning men I ever knew, was the late Thomas Holcroft. I believe he never said one thing, and meant another, in his life; and, as near as I can guess, he never acted otherwise than with the most scrupulous attention to conscience. Ought we to wish the character false, for the sake of a hollow compliment to Christianity?

Accident introduced me to the acquaintance of Mr. L. H.—and the experience of his many friendly qualities confirmed a friendship between us. You who have been misrepresented yourself, I should hope, have not lent an idle ear to the calumnies which have been spread abroad respecting this gentleman. I was admitted to his household for some years, and do most solemnly aver that I believe him to be in his domestic relations as correct as any man. He chose an ill-judged subject for a poem, the peccant humours of which have been visited on him tenfold by the artful use, which his adversaries have made, of an *equivocal term.* The subject itself was started by Dante, but better because briefier treated of. But the crime of the lovers, in the Italian and the English poet, with its aggravated enormity of circumstance, is not of a kind (as the critics of the latter well knew) with those conjunctions, for which Nature herself has provided no excuse, because no temptation. It has nothing in common with the black horrors, sung by Ford and Massinger. The familiarizing of it in tale and fable may be for that reason incidentally more contagious. In spite of Rimini, I must look upon its author as a man of taste and a poet. He is better than so; he is one of the most cordial-minded men I ever knew, and matchless as a fireside companion. I mean not to affront or wound your feelings when I say that in his more genial moods he has often reminded me of you.

There is the same air of mild dogmatism—the same condescending to a boyish sportiveness—in both your conversations. His handwriting is so much the same with your own, that I have opened more than one letter of his, hoping, nay, not doubting, but it was from you, and have been disappointed (he will bear with my saying so) at the discovery of my error. L. H. is unfortunate in holding some loose and not very definite speculations (for at times I think he hardly knows whither his premises would carry him) on marriage—the tenets, I conceive, of the "Political Justice" carried a little farther. For anything I could discover in his practice, they have reference, like those, to some future possible condition of society, and not to the present times. But neither for these obliquities of thinking (upon which my own conclusions are as distant as the poles asunder)—nor for his political asperities and petulancies, which are wearing out with the heats and vanities of youth—did I select him for a friend; but for qualities which fitted him for that relation. I do not know whether I flatter myself with being the occasion, but certain it is, that, touched with some misgivings for sundry harsh things which he had written aforetime against our friend C., before he left this country he sought a reconciliation with that gentleman (himself being his own introducer), and found it.

L. H. is now in Italy; on his departure to which land, with much regret I took my leave of him and of his little family—seven of them, sir, with their mother—and as kind a set of little people (T. H. and all), as affectionate children as ever blessed a parent. Had you seen them, sir, I think you could not have looked upon them as so many little Jonases—but rather as pledges of the vessel's safety, that was to bear such a freight of love.

I wish you would read Mr. H.'s lines to that same T. H. "six years old, during a sickness:"—

> "Sleep breaks at last from out thee,
> My little patient boy———"

(they are to be found on the 47th page of "Foliage")—and ask yourself how far they are out of the spirit of Christianity. I have a letter from Italy, received but the other day, into which L. H. has put as much heart, and as many friendly yearnings after old associates, and native country, as, I think, paper can well hold. It would do you no hurt to give that the perusal also.

From the *other gentleman* I neither expect nor desire (as he is well assured) any such concessions as L. H. made to C. What hath soured him, and made him to suspect his friends of infidelity towards him, when there was no such matter, I know not. I stood well with him for fifteen years (the proudest of my life), and have ever spoken my full mind of him to some, to whom his panegyric must naturally be least tasteful. I never in thought swerved from him, I never betrayed him, I never slackened in my admiration of him; I was the same to him (neither better nor worse), though he could not see it, as in the days when he thought fit to trust me. At this instant he may be preparing for me some compliment, above my deserts, as he has sprinkled many such among his admirable books, for which I rest his debtor; or, for anything I know, or can guess to the contrary, he may be about to read a lecture on my weaknesses. He is welcome to them (as he was to my humble hearth), if they can divert a spleen, or ventilate a fit of sullenness. I wish he would not quarrel with the world at the rate he does; but the reconciliation must be effected by himself, and I despair of living to see that day. But protesting against much that he has written, and some things which he chooses to do; judging him by his conversation which I enjoyed so long, and relished so deeply; or by his books, in those places where no clouding passion intervenes—I should belie my own conscience, if I said less, than that I think W. H. to be, in his natural and healthy state, one of the wisest and finest spirits breathing. So far from being ashamed of that intimacy, which was betwixt us, it is my boast that I was able

for so many years to have preserved it entire; and I think I shall go to my grave without finding or expecting to find, such another companion. But I forget my manners—you will pardon me, sir—I return to the correspondence.

Sir, you were pleased (you know where) to invite me to a compliance with the wholesome forms and doctrines of the Church of England. I take your advice with as much kindness as it was meant. But I must think the invitation rather more kind than seasonable. I am a Dissenter. The last sect, with which you can remember me to have made common profession, were the Unitarians. You would think it not very pertinent, if (fearing that all was not well with you), I were gravely to invite you (for a remedy) to attend with me a course of Mr. Belsham's Lectures at Hackney. Perhaps I have scruples to some of your forms and doctrines. But if I come, am I secure of civil treatment?—The last time I was in any of your places of worship was on Easter Sunday last. I had the satisfaction of listening to a very sensible sermon of an argumentative turn, delivered with great propriety by one of your bishops. The place was Westminster Abbey. As such religion as I have, has always acted on me more by way of sentiment than argumentative process, I was not unwilling, after sermon ended, by no unbecoming transition, to pass over to some serious feelings, impossible to be disconnected from the sight of those old tombs, &c. But, by whose order I know not, I was debarred that privilege even for so short a space as a few minutes; and turned, like a dog, or some profane person, out into the common street; with feelings, which I could not help, but not very congenial to the day or discourse. I do not know that I shall ever venture myself again into one of your churches.]

[In lieu of the foregoing, which was omitted from the Last Essays of Elia, the opening paragraph of the paper when transformed into an essay ran as follows]:—

Though in some points of doctrine, and perhaps of discipline, I am diffident of lending a perfect assent to that church which you have so worthily *historified*, yet may the ill time never come to me, when with a chilled heart, or a portion of irreverent sentiment, I shall enter her beautiful and time-hallowed edifices. Judge then of my mortification when, after attending the choral anthems of last Wednesday at Westminster, and being desirous of renewing my acquaintance, after lapsed years, with the tombs and antiquities there, I found myself excluded; turned out like a dog, or some profane person, into the common street, with feelings not very congenial to the place, or to the solemn service which I had been listening to. It was a jar after that music.

You had your education at Westminster; and doubtless among those dim aisles and cloisters, you must have gathered much of that devotional feeling in those young years, on which your purest mind feeds still—and may it feed! The antiquarian spirit, strong in you, and gracefully blending ever with the religious, may have been sown in you among those wrecks of splendid mortality. You owe it to the place of your education; you owe it to your learned fondness for the architecture of your ancestors; you owe it to the venerableness of your ecclesiastical establishment, which is daily lessened and called in question through these practices—to speak aloud your sense of them; never to desist raising your voice against them, till they be totally done away with and abolished; till the doors of Westminster Abbey be no longer closed against the decent, though low-in-purse enthusiast, or blameless devotee, who must commit an injury against his family economy, if he would be indulged with a bare admission within its walls. You owe it to the decencies, which you wish to see maintained in its impressive services, that our Cathedral be no longer an object of inspection to the poor at those times only, in which they must rob from their attendance on the worship every minute which they can bestow upon the fabric. In vain the public prints have taken up this subject, in vain such poor nameless writers as myself express their indignation. A word from you, sir—a hint in

your Journal—would be sufficient to fling open the doors of the Beautiful Temple again, as we can remember them when we were boys. At that time of life, what would the imaginative faculty (such as it is) in both of us, have suffered, if the entrance to so much reflection had been obstructed by the demand of so much silver!—if we had scraped it up to gain an occasional admission (as we certainly should have done) would the sight of those old tombs have been as impressive to us (while we had been weighing anxiously prudence against sentiment) as when the gates stood open as those of the adjacent Park; when we could walk in at any time, as the mood brought us, for a shorter or longer time, as that lasted? Is the being shown over a place the same as silently for ourselves detecting the genius of it? In no part of our beloved Abbey now can a person find entrance (out of service time) under the sum of *two shillings.* The rich and the great will smile at the anticlimax, presumed to lie in these two short words.. But you can tell them, sir, how much quiet worth, how much capacity for enlarged feeling, how much taste and genius, may coexist, especially in youth, with a purse incompetent to this demand.—A respected friend of ours, during his late visit to the metropolis, presented himself for admission to St. Paul's. At the same time a decently clothed man, with as decent a wife, and child, were bargaining for the same indulgence. The price was only two-pence each person. The poor but decent man hesitated, desirous to go in; but there were three of them, and he turned away reluctantly. Perhaps he wished to have seen the tomb of Nelson. Perhaps the interior of the Cathedral was his object. But in the state of his finances, even sixpence might reasonably seem too much. Tell the Aristocracy of the country (no man can do it more impressively); instruct them of what value these insignificant pieces of money, these minims to their sight, may be to their humbler brethren. Shame these Sellers out of the Temple. Stifle not the suggestions of your better nature with the pretext, that an indiscriminate admission would expose the Tombs to violation. Remember your boy-days. Did you ever see, or hear, of a mob in the Abbey, while it was free to all? Do the rabble come there, or trouble their heads about such speculations? It is all that you can do to drive them into your churches; they do not voluntarily offer themselves. They have, alas! no passion for antiquities; for tomb of king or prelate, sage or poet. If they had, they would be no longer the rabble.

For forty years that I have known the Fabric, the only well-attested charge of violation adduced, has been—a ridiculous dismemberment committed upon the effigy of that amiable spy Major Andre. And is it for this—the wanton mischief of some schoolboy, fired perhaps with raw notions of Transatlantic Freedom—or the remote possibility of such a mischief occurring again, so easily to be prevented by stationing a constable within the walls, if the vergers are incompetent to the duty—is it upon such wretched pretences, that the people of England are made to pay a new Peter's Pence, so long abrogated; or must content themselves with contemplating the ragged exterior of their Cathedral? The mischief was done about the time that you were a scholar there. Do you know anything about the unfortunate relic? [Can you help us in this emergency to find the nose? or can you give Chantrey a notion (from memory) of its pristine life and vigour? I am willing for peace's sake to subscribe my guinea towards the restoration of the lamented feature. I am, Sir, your humble servant,—ELIA.]

# Amicus Redivivus.

(*The London Magazine,* December, 1823.)

["G. D." whose escape from drowning is here commemorated, was George Dyer, formerly a student of Christ's Hospital, an old bookworm, who in later life eked out his income as a Reader for the press. Barry Cornwall describes him as the simplest and most inoffensive of men. William Hazlitt speaks of him as browsing on the husks and leaves of books and following learning as its shadow. Charles Lamb declared in his regard that the gods by denying him the very faculty of discrimination, had effectually cut off every seed of envy in his bosom. Extremely near-sighted, wonderfully absent, and, in his very gait spasmodic, he was visibly an oddity. Spare and diminutive in stature, this was the eccentric, who at broad noonday, as Elia here relates, marched straight into "the New River (by this rather elderly)" running immediately in front of Elia's then home, Colebrook Cottage.]

> Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
> Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?

I DO not know when I have experienced a stranger sensation, than on seeing my old friend G. D., who had been paying me a morning visit a few Sundays back, at my cottage at Islington, upon taking leave, instead of turning down the right-hand path by which he had entered—with staff in hand, and at noonday, deliberately march right forwards into the midst of the stream that runs by us, and totally disappear.*

A spectacle like this at dusk would have been appalling enough; but, in the broad open daylight, to witness such an unreserved motion towards self-destruction in a valued friend, took from me all power of speculation.

How I found my feet, I know not. Consciousness was quite gone. Some spirit, not my own, whirled me to the spot. I remember nothing but the silvery apparition of a good white head emerging; nigh which a staff (the hand unseen that wielded it) pointed upwards, as feeling for the skies. In a moment (if time was in that time) he was on my shoulders, and I—freighted with a load more precious than he who bore Anchises.

And here I cannot but do justice to the officious zeal of sundry passers-by, who albeit arriving a little too late to participate in the honours of the rescue, in philanthropic shoals came thronging to communicate their advice as to the recovery; prescribing variously the application, or non-application of salt, &c, to the person of the patient. Life meantime was ebbing fast away, amidst the stifle of conflicting judgments, when one, more sagacious than the rest by a bright thought, proposed sending for the doctor. Trite as the counsel was, and impossible as one should think, to be missed on,—shall I confess?—in this emergency, it was to me as if an Angel had spoken. Great previous exertions—and mine had not been inconsiderable—are commonly followed by a debility of purpose. This was a moment of irresolution.

MONOCULUS—for so, in default of catching his true name, I choose to designate the medical gentleman who now appeared—is a grave middle-aged person,

* [The topography of my cottage and its relation to the river will explain this, as I have been at some cost to have the whole engraved (in time, I hope, for our next number), as well for the satisfaction of the reader as to commemorate so signal a deliverance.]

who, without having studied at the college, or truckled to the pedantry of a diploma, hath employed a great portion of his valuable time in experimental processes upon the bodies of unfortunate fellow-creatures, in whom the vital spark, to mere vulgar thinking, would seem extinct, and lost for ever. He omitteth no occasion of obtruding his services, from a case of common-surfeit-suffocation to the ignobler obstructions, sometimes induced by a too wilful application of the plant *Cannabis* outwardly. But though he declineth not altogether these drier extinctions, his occupation tendeth for the most part to water-practice; for the convenience of which, he hath judiciously fixed his quarters near the grand repository of the stream mentioned, where, day and night, from his little watch-tower, at the Middleton's Head, he listeneth to detect the wrecks of drowned mortality--partly, as he saith, to be upon the spot—and partly, because the liquids which he useth to prescribe to himself and his patients, on these distressing occasions, are ordinarily more conveniently to be found at these common hostelries, than in the shops and phials of the apothecaries. His ear hath arrived to such finesse by practice, that it is reported, he can distinguish a plunge at a half furlong distance; and can tell if it be casual or deliberate. He weareth a medal, suspended over a suit, originally of a sad brown, but which, by time, and frequency of nightly divings has been dinged into a true professional sable. He passeth by the name of Doctor, and is remarkable for wanting his left eye. His remedy—after a sufficient application of warm blankets, friction, &c., is a simple tumbler or more, of the purest Cognac, with water, made as hot as the convalescent can bear it. Where he findeth, as in the case of my friend, a squeamish subject, he condescendeth to be the taster, and showeth, by his own example, the innocuous nature of the prescription. Nothing can be more kind or encouraging than this procedure. It addeth confidence to the patient, to see his medical adviser go hand in hand with himself in the remedy. When the doctor swalloweth his own draught, what peevish invalid can refuse to pledge him in the potion? In fine, MONOCULUS is a humane, sensible man, who, for a slender pittance, scarce enough to sustain life, is content to wear it out in the endeavour to save the lives of others—his pretentions so moderate, that with difficulty I could press a crown upon him, for the price of restoring the existence of such an invaluable creature to society as G. D.

It was pleasant to observe the effect of the subsiding alarm upon the nerves of the dear absentee. It seemed to have given a shake to memory, calling up notice after notice, of all the providential deliverances he had experienced in the course of his long and innocent life. Sitting up in my couch—my couch which, naked and void of furniture hitherto, for the salutary repose which it administered, shall be honoured with costly vallance, at some price, and henceforth be a state-bed at Colebrook,—he discoursed of marvellous escapes—by carelessness of nurses—by pails of gelid, and kettles of the boiling element, in infancy—by orchard pranks, and snapping twigs, in schoolboy frolics—by descent of tiles at Trumpington, and of heavier tomes at Pembroke—by studious watchings, inducing frightful vigilance, by want, and the fear of want, and all the sore throbbings of the learned head.—Anon, he would burst out into little fragments of chaunting—of songs long ago—ends of deliverance hymns, not remembered before since childhood, but coming up now, when his heart was made tender as a child's—for the *tremor cordis*, in the retrospect of a recent deliverance, as in a case of impending danger, acting upon an innocent heart, will produce a self-tenderness, which we should do ill to christen cowardice; and Shakespeare, in the latter crisis, has made his good Sir Hugh to remember the sitting by Babylon, and to mutter of shallow rivers.

Waters of Sir Hugh Middleton—what a spark you were like to have extinguished for ever! Your salubrious streams to this City, for now near two centuries, would hardly have atoned for what you were in a moment washing

away. Mockery of a river—liquid artificé—wretched conduit! henceforth rank with canals and sluggish aqueducts. Was it for this, that, smit in boyhood with the explorations of that Abyssinian traveller, I paced the vales of Amwell to explore your tributary springs, to trace your salutary waters sparkle through green Hertfordshire, and cultured Enfield parks?—Ye have no swans—no Naiads—no river God—or did the benevolent hoary aspect of my friend tempt ye to suck him in, that ye might also have the tutelary genius of your waters?

Had he been drowned in Cam there would have been some consonancy in it; but what willows had ye to wave and rustle over his moist sepulchre?—or, having no *name*, besides that unmeaning assumption of *eternal novity*, did ye think to get one by the noble prize, and henceforth to be termed the STREAM DYERIAN?

> And could such spacious virtue find a grave
> Beneath the imposthumed bubble of a wave?

I protest, George, you shall not venture out again—no, not by daylight—without a sufficient pair of spectacles—in your musing moods especially. Your absence of mind we have borne, till your presence of body came to be called in question by it. You shall not go wandering into Euripus with Aristotle, if we can help it. Fie, man, to turn dipper at your years, after your many tracts in favour of sprinkling only!

I have nothing but water in my head o' nights since this frightful accident. Sometimes I am with Clarence in his dream. At others, I behold Christian beginning to sink, and crying out to his good brother Hopeful (that is to me), "I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head, all the waves go over me. Selah." Then I have before me Palinurus, just letting go the steerage. I cry out too late to save. Next follow—a mournful procession—*suicidal faces*, saved against their wills from drowning! dolefully trailing a length of reluctant gratefulness, with ropy weeds pendant from locks of watchet hue—constrained Lazari—Pluto's half-subjects—stolen fees from the grave—bilking Charon of his fare. At their head Arion—or is it G. D.?—in his singing garments marcheth singly, with harp in hand, and votive garland, which Macheon (or Dr. Hawes) snatcheth straight, intending to suspend it to the stern God of Sea. Then follow dismal streams of Lethe, in which the half-drenched on earth are constrained to drown downright, by wharves where Ophelia twice acts her muddy death.

And, doubtless, there is some notice in that invisible world, when one of us approacheth (as my friend did so lately) to their inexorable precincts. When a soul knocks once, twice, at death's door, the sensation aroused within the palace must be considerable; and the grim Feature, by modern science so often dispossessed of his prey, must have learned by this time to pity Tantalus.

A pulse assuredly was felt along the line of the Elysian shades, when the near arrival of G. D. was announced by no equivocal indications. From their seats of Asphodel arose the gentler and the graver ghosts—poet, or historian—of Grecian or of Roman lore—to crown with unfading chaplets the half-finished love-labours of their unwearied scholiast. Him Markland expected—him Tyrwhitt hoped to encounter—him the sweet lyrist of Peter House, whom he had barely seen upon earth,* with newest airs prepared to greet——; and, patron of the gentle Christ's boy,—who should have been his patron through life—the mild Askew, with longing aspirations, leaned foremost from his venerable Æsculapian chair, to welcome into that happy company the matured virtues of the man, whose tender scions in the boy he himself upon earth had so prophetically fed and watered.

* GRAIUM *tantum vidit.*

# Blakesmoor in H——shire.

(*The London Magazine*, September, 1824.)

[Under the title of Blakesmoor, Charles Lamb has here described the old Elizabethan mansion of the Plumers, at Gilston in Hertfordshire. From the Plumers, in Elia's own time, the estate had passed into the possession of a collateral descendant of the race, Robert Plumer Ward, sometime Under Secretary of State, Lord of the Admiralty and Clerk of the Ordnance, but better known in his day as the didactic novelist who wrote "De Vere" and "Tremaine." At Gilston lived for many years, as housekeeper, the original of Mrs. Sarah Battle, old Mrs. Field, Charles Lamb's maternal grandmother.]

I DO not know a pleasure more affecting than to range at will over the deserted apartments of some fine old family mansion. The traces of extinct grandeur admit of a better passion than envy: and contemplations on the great and good, whom we fancy in succession to have been its inhabitants, weave for us illusions, incompatible with the bustle of modern occupancy, and vanities of foolish present aristocracy. The same difference of feeling, I think, attends us between entering an empty and a crowded church. In the latter it is chance but some present human frailty—an act of inattention on the part of some of the auditory—or a trait of affectation, or worse, vain-glory, on that of the preacher—puts us by our best thoughts, disharmonizing the place and the occasion. But would'st thou know the beauty of holiness?—go alone on some week-day, borrowing the keys of good Master Sexton, traverse the cool aisles of some country church: think of the piety that has kneeled there—the congregations, old and young, that have found consolation there—the meek pastor—the docile parishioner. With no disturbing emotions, no cross conflicting comparisons, drink in the tranquillity of the place, till thou thyself become as fixed and motionless as the marble effigies that kneel and weep around thee.

Journeying northward lately, I could not resist going some few miles out of my road to look upon the remains of an old great house with which I had been impressed in this way in infancy. I was apprised that the owner of it had lately pulled it down; still I had a vague notion that it could not all have perished, that so much solidity with magnificence could not have been crushed all at once into the mere dust and rubbish which I found it.

The work of ruin had proceeded with a swift hand indeed, and the demolition of a few weeks had reduced it to—an antiquity.

I was astonished at the indistinction of everything. Where had stood the great gates? What bounded the courtyard? Whereabout did the outhouses commence? a few bricks only lay as representatives of that which was so stately and so spacious.

Death does not shrink up his human victim at this rate. The burnt ashes of a man weigh more in their proportion.

Had I seen these brick-and-mortar knaves at their process of destruction, at the plucking of every panel I should have felt the varlets at my heart. I should have cried out to them to spare a plank at least out of the cheerful store-room, in whose hot-window seat I used to sit and read Cowley, with the grass-plot before, and the hum and flappings of that one solitary wasp that ever haunted it about me—it is in mine ears now, as oft as summer returns; or a panel of the yellow room.

Why, every plank and panel of that house for me had magic in it. The tapestried bedrooms—tapestry so much better than painting—not adorning merely, but peopling the wainscots—at which childhood ever and anon

would steal and look, shifting its coverlid (replaced as quickly) to exercise its tender courage in a momentary eye-encounter with those stern bright visages, staring reciprocally—all Ovid on the walls, in colours vivider than his descriptions. Actæon in mid sprout, with the unappeasable prudery of Diana; and the still more provoking, and almost culinary coolness of Dan Phœbus, eel-fashion, deliberately divesting of Marsyas.

Then, that haunted room—in which old Mrs. Battle died—whereinto I have crept, but always in the daytime, with a passion of fear; and a sneaking curiosity, terror-tainted, to hold communication with the past.—*How shall they build it up again?*

It was an old deserted place, yet not so long deserted but that traces of the splendour of past inmates were everywhere apparent. Its furniture was still standing—even to the tarnished gilt leather battledores, and crumbling feathers of shuttlecocks in the nursery, which told that children had once played there. But I was a lonely child, and had the range at will of every apartment, knew every nook and corner, wondered and worshipped everywhere.

The solitude of childhood is not so much the mother of thought, as it is the feeder of love, and silence and admiration. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years, that, though there lay—I shame to say how few roods distant from the mansion—half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not till late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found, to my astonishment, a pretty brawling brook had been the Lacus Incognitus of my infancy. Variegated views, extensive prospects—and those at no great distance from the house—I was told of such—what were they to me, being out of the boundaries of my Eden?—So far from a wish to roam, I would have drawn, methought, still closer the fences of my chosen prison; and have been hemmed in by a yet securer cincture of those excluding garden walls. I could have exclaimed with that garden-loving poet—

> Bind me ye woodbines, in your twines;
> Curl me about, ye gadding vines;
> And oh so close your circles lace,
> That I may never leave this place:
> But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
> Ere I your silken bondage break,
> Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
> And, courteous briars, nail me through.*

I was here as in a lonely temple. Snug firesides—the low-built roof—parlours ten feet by ten—frugal boards, and all the homeliness of home—these were the condition of my birth—the wholesome soil which I was planted in. Yet, without impeachment to their tenderest lessons, I am not sorry to have had glances of something beyond; and to have taken, if but a peep, in childhood, at the contrasting accidents of a great fortune.

To have the feeling of gentility, it is not necessary to have been born gentle. The pride of ancestry may be had on cheaper terms than to be obliged to an importunate race of ancestors; and the coatless antiquary in his unemblazoned cell, revolving the long line of a Mowbray's or De Clifford's pedigree, at those sounding names may warm himself into as gay a vanity as those who do inherit them. The claims of birth are ideal merely, and what herald shall go about to strip me of an idea? Is it trenchant to their swords? can it be hacked off as a spur can? or torn away like a tarnished garter?

What, else, were the families of the great to us? what pleasure should we take in their tedious genealogies, or their capitulatory brass monuments?

* Marvell on Appleton House, to the Lord Fairfax.

What to us the uninterrupted current of their bloods, if our own did not answer within us to a cognate and correspondent elevation.

Or wherefore, else, O tattered and diminished 'Scutcheon that hung upon the time-worn walls of thy princely stairs, BLAKESMOOR! have I in childhood so oft stood poring upon thy mystic characters—thy emblematic supporters, with their prophetic "Resurgam"—till, every dreg of peasantry purging off, I received into myself Very Gentility? Thou wert first in my morning eyes; and of nights, hast detained my steps from bedward, till it was but a step from gazing at thee to dreaming on thee.

This is the only true gentry by adoption; the veritable change of blood, and not, as empirics have fabled, by transfusion.

Who it was by dying that had earned the splendid trophy, I knew not, I inquired not; but its fading rags, and colours cobweb-stained, told that its subject was of two centuries back.

And what if my ancestor at that date was some Damœtas—feeding flocks, not his own, upon the hills of Lincoln—did I in less earnest vindicate to myself the family trappings of this once proud Ægon?—repaying by a backward triumph the insults he might possibly have heaped in his lifetime upon my poor pastoral progenitor.

If it were presumption so to speculate, the present owners of the mansion had least reason to complain. They had long forsaken the old house of their fathers for a newer trifle; and I was left to appropriate to myself what images I could pick up, to raise my fancy, or to sooth my vanity.

I was the true descendant of those old W——s; and not the present family of that name, who had fled the old waste places.

Mine was that gallery of good old family portraits, which as I have gone over, giving them in fancy my own family name, one—and then another—would seem to smile, reaching forward from the canvas, to recognize the new relationship; while the rest looked grave, as it seemed, at the vacancy in their dwelling, and thoughts of fled posterity.

That Beauty with the cool blue pastoral drapery, and a lamb—that hung next the great bay window—with the bright yellow H——shire hair, and eye of watchet hue—so like my Alice!—I am persuaded she was a true Elia—Mildred Elia, I take it.

[From her, and from my passion for her—for I first learned love from a picture—Bridget took the hint of those pretty whimsical lines, which thou mayst see, if haply thou hast never seen them, Reader, in the margin.* But my Mildred grew not old, like the imaginary Helen.]

Mine too, BLAKESMOOR, was thy noble Marble Hall, with its mosaic pavements, and its Twelve Cæsars—stately busts in marble—ranged round: of whose countenances, young reader of faces as I was, the frowning beauty of Nero, I remember, had most of my wonder; but the mild Galba had my love. There they stood in the coldness of death, yet freshness of immortality.

Mine too, thy lofty Justice Hall, with its one chair of authority, high-backed

[* HELEN.

High-born Helen, round your dwelling
These twenty years I've passed in vain,
Haughty beauty, thy lover's duty
Hath been to glory in his pain.

High-born Helen, proudly telling
Stories of thy cold disdain:
I starve, I die, now you comply,
And I no longer can complain.

These twenty years I've lived on tears,
Dwelling for ever on a frown;
On sighs I've fed, your scorn my bread;
I perish now you kind have grown.

Can I who loved my beloved
But for the scorn "was in her eye,"
Could I be moved for my beloved,
When she "returns me sigh for sigh?"

In stately pride, by my bed-side
High-born Helen's portrait's hung;
Deaf to my praise, my mournful lays
Are nightly to the portrait sung.

To that I weep, nor ever sleep,
Complaining all night long to her—
Helen, grown old, no longer cold,
Said, "You to all men I prefer."]

and wickered, once the terror of luckless poacher, or self-forgetful maiden—so common since, that bats have roosted in it.

Mine too—whose else?—the costly fruit-garden, with its sun-baked southern wall; the ampler pleasure-garden, rising backwards from the house in triple terraces, with flower-pots now of palest lead, save that a speck here and there, saved from the elements, bespake their pristine state to have been gilt and glittering; the verdant quarters backwarder still; and, stretching still beyond, in old formality, the firry wilderness, the haunt of the squirrel, and the day-long murmuring woodpigeon, with that antique image in the centre, God or Goddess I wist not; but child of Athens or old Rome paid never a sincerer worship to Pan or to Sylvanus in their native groves, than I to that fragmental mystery.

Was it for this, that I kissed my childish hands too fervently in your idol worship, walks and windings of BLAKESMOOR! for this, or what sin of mine, has the plough passed over your pleasant places? I sometimes think that as men, when they die, do not die all, so of their extinguished habitations there may be a hope—a germ to be revivified.

# Captain Jackson.

(*The London Magazine*, November, 1824.)

AMONG the deaths of our obituary for this month, I observe with concern "his cottage on the Bath road, Captain Jackson." The name and attribution are common enough; but a feeling like reproach persuades me, that this could have been no other in fact than my dear old friend, who some five-and-twenty years ago rented a tenement, which he was pleased to dignify with the appellation here used, about a mile from Westbourne Green. Alack, how good men, and the good turns they do us, slide out of memory, and are recalled but by the surprise of some such sad momento as that which now lies before us!

He whom I mean was a retired half-pay officer, with a wife and two grown-up daughters, whom he maintained with the port and notions of gentlewomen upon that slender professional allowance. Comely girls they were too.

And was I in danger of forgetting this man?—his cheerful suppers—the noble tone of hospitality, when first you set your foot in *the cottage*—the anxious ministerings about you, where little or nothing (God knows) was to be ministered.—Althea's horn in a poor platter—the power of self-enchantment, by which, in his magnificent wishes to entertain you, he multiplied his means to bounties.

You saw with your bodily eyes indeed what seemed a bare scrag—cold savings from the foregone meal—remnant hardly sufficient to send a mendicant from the door contented. But in the copious will—the revelling imagination of your host—the "mind, the mind, Master Shallow," whole beeves were spread before you—hecatombs—no end appeared to the profusion.

It was the widow's cruse—the loaves and fishes; carving could not lessen nor helping diminish it—the stamina were left—the elemental bone still flourished, divested of its accidents.

"Let us live while we can," methinks I hear the open-handed creature exclaim; "while we have let us not want," "here is plenty left;" "want for

nothing"—with many more such hospitable sayings, the spurs of appetite, and old concomitants of smoking boards, and feast-oppressed chargers. Then sliding a slender ratio of Single Gloucester upon his wife's plate, or the daughter's, he would convey the remnant rind into his own, with a merry quirk of "the nearer the bone," &c., and declaring that he universally preferred the outside. For we had our table distinctions, you are to know, and some of us in a manner sate above the salt. None but his guest or guests dreamed of tasting flesh luxuries at night, the fragments were *verè hospitibus sacra.* But of one thing or another there was always enough, and leavings: only he would sometimes finish the remainder crust, to show that he wished no savings.

Wine we had none; nor, except on very rare occasions, spirits; but the sensation of wine was there. Some thin kind of ale I remember—"British beverage," he would say! "Push about, my boys;" "Drink to your sweethearts, girls." At every meagre draught a toast must ensue, or a song. All the forms of good liquor were there, with none of the effects wanting. Shut your eyes, and you would swear a capacious bowl of punch was foaming in the centre, with beams of generous Port or Madeira radiating to it from each of the table corners. You got flustered, without knowing whence; tipsy upon words; and reeled under the potency of his unperforming Bacchanalian encouragements.

We had our songs—"Why, Soldiers, Why"—and the "British Grenadiers"—in which last we were all obliged to bear chorus. Both the daughters sang. Their proficiency was a nightly theme—the masters had given them—the "no-expense" which he spared to accomplish them in a science "so necessary to young women." But then—they could not sing "without the instrument."

Sacred, and by me, never-to-be-violated, Secrets of Poverty! Should I disclose your honest aims at grandeur, your makeshift efforts of magnificence? Sleep, sleep, with all thy broken keys, if one of the bunch be extant; thrummed by a thousand ancestral thumbs! dear cracked spinnet of dearer Louisa! Without mention of mine, be dumb, thou thinner accompanier of her thinner warble! A veil be spread over the dear delighted face of the well-deluded father, who now haply listening to cherubic notes, scarce feels sincerer pleasure than when she awakened thy time-shaken chords responsive to the twitterings of that slender image of a voice.

We are not without our literary talk either. It did not extend far, but as far as it went, it was good. It was bottomed well; had good grounds to go upon. In *the cottage* was a room, which tradition authenticated to have been the same in which Glover, in his occasional retirements, had penned the greater part of his Leonidas. This circumstance was nightly quoted, though none of the present inmates, that I could discover, appeared ever to have met with the poem in question. But that was no matter. Glover had written there, and the anecdote was pressed into the account of the family importance. It diffused a learned air through the apartment, the little side casement of which (the poet's study window), opened upon a superb view as far as to the pretty spire of Harrow, over domains and patrimonial acres, not a rood nor square yard whereof our host could call his own, yet gave occasion to an immoderate expansion of—vanity shall I call it?—in his bosom, as he showed them in a glowing summer evening. It was all his, he took it all in, and communicated rich portions of it to his guests. It was a part of his largess, his hospitality; it was going over his grounds; he was lord for the time of showing them, and you the implicit lookers-up to his magnificence.

He was a juggler, who threw mists before your eyes—you had no time to detect his fallacies. He would say "hand me the *silver* sugar tongs; and, before you could discover it was a single spoon, and that *plated*, he would dis-

turb and captivate your imagination by a misnomer of "the urn" for a tea-kettle; or by calling a homely bench a sofa. Rich men direct you to their furniture, poor ones divert you from it; he neither did one nor the other, but by simply assuming that everything was handsome about him, you were positively at a demur what you did, or did not see, at *the cottage*. With nothing to live on, he seemed to live on everything. He had a stock of wealth in his mind; not that which is properly termed *Content*, for in truth he was not to be *contained* at all, but overflowed all bounds by the force of a magnificent self-delusion.

Enthusiasm is catching; and even his wife, a sober native of North Britain, who generally saw things more as they were, was not proof against the continual collision of his credulity. Her daughters were rational and discreet young women; in the main, perhaps, not insensible to their true circumstances. I have seen them assume a thoughtful air at times. But such was the preponderating opulence of his fancy, that I am persuaded, not for any half-hour together, did they ever look their own prospects fairly in the face. There was no resisting the vortex of his temperament. His riotous imagination conjured up handsome settlements before their eyes, which kept them in the eye of the world too, and seem at last to have realized themselves; for they both have married since, I am told, more than respectably.

It is long since, and my memory waxes dim on some subjects, or I should wish to convey some notion of the manner in which the pleasant creature described the circumstances of his own wedding-day. I faintly remember something of a chaise and four, in which he made his entry into Glasgow on that morning to fetch the bride home, or carry her thither, I forget which. It so completely made out the stanza of the old ballad—

> When we came down through Glasgow town,
> We were a comely sight to see;
> My love was clad in black velvet,
> And I myself in cramasie.

I suppose it was the only occasion, upon which his own actual splendour at all corresponded with the world's notions on that subject. In homely cart, or travelling caravan, by whatever humble vehicle they chanced to be transported in less prosperous days, the ride through Glasgow came back upon his fancy, not as a humiliating contrast, but as a fair occasion for reverting to that one day's state. It seemed an "equipage etern" from which no power of fate or fortune, once mounted, had power thereafter to dislodge him.

There is some merit in putting a handsome face upon indigent circumstances. To bully and swagger away the sense of them before strangers, may not be always discommendable. Tibbs, and Bobadil, even when detected, have more of our admiration than contempt. But for a man to put the cheat upon himself; to play the Bobadil at home; and, steeped in poverty up to the lips, to fancy himself all the while chin-deep in riches, is a strain of constitutional philosophy, and a mastery over fortune, which was reserved for my old friend Captain Jackson.

## Barbara S——.

(*The London Magazine*, April, 1825.)

[Opposite this page is given the facsimile of a note in Charles Lamb's handwriting, from which it will be seen as plainly as the simplest words could put it, that Barbara S—— was in reality Miss Kelly, and not Mrs. Crawford. The footnote at the close of the paper was therefore only another of Elia's highly elaborated practices upon the

Barbara S— shadows
under that name miss Kelly's early life. & I had ye the
Anecdote beautifully from her

reader's credulity. In the Prefatory Memoir to this Popular Centenary Edition, the Editor has given a letter addressed to himself by Miss Kelly, in the September of 1875, giving, more than half a century after the original publication of "Barbara S——," that gifted and venerable lady's own charming version of the incident. In the light cast by that communication upon this essay the readers of Elia will henceforth clearly see that it was "Fanny Kelly's divine plain face," as Charles Lamb elsewhere calls it, that was turned upon the old theatrical treasurer, when the money was handed back, and not the face of Barbara Street, afterwards in succession Mrs. Dancer, Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Crawford.]

ON the noon of the 14th of November, 1743 or 4, I forget which it was, just as the clock had struck one, Barbara S———, with her accustomed punctuality, ascended the long rambling staircase, with awkward interposed landing-places, which led to the office, or rather a sort of box with a desk in it, whereat sat the then Treasurer of (what few of our readers may remember) the Old Bath Theatre. All over the island it was the custom, and remains so I believe to this day, for the players to receive their weekly stipend on the Saturday. It was not much that Barbara had to claim.

This little maid had just entered her eleventh year; but her important station at the theatre, as it seemed to her, with the benefits which she felt to accrue from her pious application of her small earnings, had given an air of womanhood to her steps and to her behaviour. You would have taken her to have been at least five years older.

Till latterly she had merely been employed in choruses, or where children were wanted to fill up the scene. But the manager, observing a diligence and adroitness in her above her age, had for some few months past entrusted to her the performance of whole parts. You may guess the self-consequence of the promoted Barbara. She had already drawn tears in young Arthur; had rallied Richard with infantine petulance in the Duke of York; and in her turn had rebuked that petulance when she was Prince of Wales. She would have done the elder child in Morton's pathetic after-piece to the life; but as yet the *Children in the Wood* was not.

Long after this little girl was grown an aged woman, I have seen some of these small parts, each making two or three pages at most, copied out in the rudest hand of the then prompter, who doubtless transcribed a little more carefully and fairly for the grown-up tragedy ladies of the establishment. But such as they were, blotted and scrawled, as for a child's use, she kept them all; and in the zenith of her after-reputation it was a delightful sight to behold them bound up in costliest Morocco, each single—each small part making a *book*—with fine clasps, gilt splashed, &c. She had conscientiously kept them as they had been delivered to her; not a blot had been effaced or tampered with. They were precious to her for their affecting remembrancings. They were her principia, her rudiments; the elementary atoms; the little steps by which she pressed forward to perfection. "What," she would say, "could india-rubber, or a pumice stone, have done for these darlings?"

I am in no hurry to begin my story—indeed I have little or none to tell—so I will just mention an observation of hers connected with that interesting time.

Not long before she died, I had been discoursing with her on the quantity of real present emotion which a great tragic performer experiences during acting. I ventured to think, that though in the first instance such players must have possessed the feelings which they so powerfully called up in others, yet by frequent repetition those feelings must become deadened in great measure, and the performer trust to the memory of past emotion, rather than express a present one. She indignantly repelled the notion, that with a truly great tragedian the operation, by which such effects were produced upon an audience, could ever degrade itself into what was purely mechanical. With much delicacy, avoiding to instance in her *self* experience, she told me, that so long ago as when she used to play the part of the Little Son to Mrs. Porter's Isabella (I think it was)

when that impressive actress has been bending over her in some heart-rending colloquy, she has felt real hot tears come trickling from her, which (to use her powerful expression) have perfectly scalded her back.

I am not quite so sure that it was Mrs. Porter; but it was some great actress of that day. The name is indifferent; but the fact of the scalding tears I most distinctly remember.

I was always fond of the society of players, and am not sure that an impediment in my speech (which certainly kept me out of the pulpit) even more than certain personal disqualifications, which are often got over in that profession, did not prevent me at one time of life from adopting it. I have had the honour (I must ever call it) once to have been admitted to the tea-table of Miss Kelly. I have played at serious whist with Mr. Liston. I have chatted with ever good-humoured Mrs. Charles Kemble. I have conversed as friend to friend with her accomplished husband. I have been indulged with a classical conference with Macready; and with a sight of the Player-picture gallery, at Mr. Matthews's, when the kind owner, to remunerate me for my love of the old actors (whom he loves so much), went over it with me, supplying to his capital collection, what alone the artist could not give them—voice; and their living motion. Old tones, half-faded, of Dodd and Parsons and Baddeley, have lived again for me at his bidding. Only Edwin he could not restore to me. I have supped with——; but I am growing a coxcomb.

As I was about to say—at the desk of the then treasurer of the old Bath theatre—not Diamond's—presented herself the little Barbara S——.

The parents of Barbara had been in reputable circumstances. The father had practised, I believe, as an apothecary in the town. But his practice from causes which I feel my own infirmity too sensibly that way to arraign—or perhaps from that pure infelicity which accompanies some people in their walk through life, and which it is impossible to lay at the door of imprudence—was now reduced to nothing. They were in fact in the very teeth of starvation, when the manager, who knew and respected them in better days, took the little Barbara into his company.

At the period I commenced with, her slender earnings were the sole support of the family, including two younger sisters. I must throw a veil over some mortifying circumstances. Enough to say, that her Saturday's pittance was the only chance of a Sunday's (generally their only) meal of meat.

One thing I will only mention, that in some child's part, where in her theatrical character she was to sup off a roast fowl (O joy to Barbara!) some comic actor, who was for the night caterer for this dainty—in the misguided humour of his part, threw over the dish such a quantity of salt (O grief and pain of heart to Barbara!) that when he crammed a portion of it into her mouth, she was obliged sputteringly to reject it; and what with shame of her ill-acted part, and pain of real appetite at missing such a dainty, her little heart sobbed almost to breaking, till a flood of tears, which the well-fed spectators were totally unable to comprehend, mercifully relieved her.

This was the little starved, meritorious maid, who stood before old Ravenscroft, the treasurer, for her Saturday's payment.

Ravenscroft was a man, I have heard many old theatrical people besides herself say, of all men least calculated for a treasurer. He had no head for accounts, paid away at random, kept scarce any books, and summing up at the week's end, if he found himself a pound or so deficient, blest himself that it was no worse.

Now Barbara's weekly stipend was a bare half guinea.—By mistake he popped into her hand a—whole one.

Barbara tripped away.

She was entirely unconscious at first of the mistake: God knows, Ravenscroft would never have discovered it.

But when she had got down to the first of those uncouth landing-places, she became sensible of an unusual weight of metal pressing her little hand.

Now mark the dilemma.

She was by nature a good child. From her parents and those about her she had imbibed no contrary influence. But then they had taught her nothing. Poor men's smoky cabins are not always porticoes of moral philosophy. This little maid had no instinct to evil, but then she might be said to have no fixed principle. She had heard honesty commended, but never dreamed of its application to herself. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people—men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it.

Her first impulse was to go back to the old treasurer, and explain to him his blunder. He was already so confused with age, besides a natural want of punctuality, that she would have had some difficulty in making him understand it. She saw *that* in an instant. And then it was such a bit of money! and then the image of a larger allowance of butcher's meat on their table next day came across her, till her little eyes glistened, and her mouth moistened. But then Mr. Ravenscroft had always been so good-natured, had stood her friend behind the scenes, and even recommended her promotion to some of her little parts. But again the old man was reputed to be worth a world of money. He was supposed to have fifty pounds a year clear of the theatre. And then came staring upon her the figures of her little stockingless and shoeless sisters. And when she looked at her own neat white cotton stockings, which her situation at the theatre had made it indispensable for her mother to provide for her, with hard straining and pinching from the family stock, and thought how glad she should be to cover their poor feet with the same—and how then they could accompany her to rehearsals, which they had hitherto been precluded from doing, by reason of their unfashionable attire,—in these thoughts she reached the second landing-place—the second, I mean from the top—for there was still another left to traverse.

Now virtue support Barbara!

And that never-failing friend did step in—for at that moment a strength not her own I have heard her say, was revealed to her—a reason above reasoning—and without her own agency, as it seemed (for she never felt her feet to move) she found herself transported back to the individual desk she had just quitted, and her hand in the old hand of Ravenscroft, who in silence took back the refunded treasure, and who had been sitting (good man) insensible to the lapse of minutes, which to her were anxious ages; and from that moment a deep peace fell upon her heart, and she knew the quality of honesty.

A year or two's unrepining application to her profession brightened up the feet, and the prospects of her little sisters, set the whole family upon their legs again, and released her from the difficulty of discussing moral dogmas upon a landing-place.

I have heard her say, that it was a surprise, not much short of mortification to her, to see the coolness with which the old man pocketed the difference, which had caused her such mortal throes.

This anecdote of herself I had in the year 1800, from the mouth of the late Mrs. Crawford,* then sixty-seven years of age (she died soon after); and to her struggles upon this childish occasion I have sometimes ventured to think her indebted for that power of rending the heart in the representation of conflicting emotions, for which in after-years she was considered as little inferior (if at all so in the part of Lady Randolph) even to Mrs. Siddons.

* The maiden name of this lady was Street, which she changed, by successive marriages, for those of Dancer, Barry, and Crawford. She was Mrs. Crawford, and a third time a widow, when I knew her.

# The Superannuated Man.

(*The London Magazine*, May, 1825.)

Sera tamen respexit
Libertas. VIRGIL.

A Clerk I was in London gay.
O'KEEFE.

IF peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six and thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant play-time, and the frequently-intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours'-a-day attendance at a counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly contented, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted of days for unbending and recreation* In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a week-day saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No book-stalls deliciously to idle over—no busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant-maid that has got leave to go out, who slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour; and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day look anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable.

* Our ancestors, the noble old Puritans of Cromwell's day, could distinguish between a day of religious rest and a day of recreation; and while they exacted a rigorous abstinence from all amusements (even to the walking out of nurserymaids with their little charges in the fields) upon the Sabbath; in the lieu of the superstitious observance of the saints' days, which they abrogated, they humanely gave to the apprentices and poorer sort of people every alternate Thursday for a day of entire sport and recreation. A strain of piety and policy to be commended above the profane mockery of the Stuarts and their book of sports.

But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my day-light servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would wake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when, on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L——, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock) I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought, Now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when to my utter astonishment B——, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much.) He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!) and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever. This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me to conceal their names—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world—the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.

*Esto perpetua!*

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition

of a prisoner in the old Bastile, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of my vast possessions; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their old resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away, but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candle-light Time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in bygone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it come to me. I am like the man

> ———That's born, and has his years come to him
> In some green desert.

"Years," you will say! "what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us, he is past fifty."

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied to me, threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the counting-house. I could not conceive it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks, with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death:

> ————'Twas but just now he went away;
> I have not since had time to shed a tear;
> And yet the distance does the same appear
> As if he had been a thousand years from me,
> Time takes no measure in Eternity.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore me to that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——l take me, if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not,—at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toil for six-and-thirty

years, that smoothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged then after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know, that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl——, officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington of old, stately House of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one half the year supplied the place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my "works!" There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian, from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural to me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at eleven o'clock in the day in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine picture in the morning. Was it ever otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill? Where is Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six-and-thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles. It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week, or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days; in its distance from, or propinquity to, the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, &c. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed that Ethiop white? What is gone of Black Monday? All days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week-day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge cantle which it used to seem to cut out of the holiday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt a man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May-morning. It is Lucretian pleasure to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for? [I recite those verses of Cowley which so mightily agree with my constitution:—

"Business! the frivolous pretence
Of human lusts to shake off innocence.
Business! the grave impertinence:
Business! the thing which I, of all things, hate;
Business! the contradiction of my fate."

Or I repeat my own lines, written in my clerk state:—

"Who first-invented work," etc.—[*vide supra*, p. 38.]

O this divine leisure! Reader, if thou art furnished with the old series of the "London," turn incontinently to the third volume (page 367), and you will see my present condition there touched in a "Wish" by a daintier pen than I can pretend to. I subscribe to that Sonnet *toto corde.*] A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and swallow up those accursed cotton mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.

I am no longer * * * * * *, clerk to the Firm of &c. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate* air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper, it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.* I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself.

## The Convalescent.

(*The London Magazine*, July, 1825.)

A PRETTY severe fit of indisposition which, under the name of a nervous fever, has made a prisoner of me for some weeks past, and is but slowly leaving me, has reduced me to an incapacity of reflecting upon any topic foreign to itself. Expect no healthy conclusions from me this month, reader; I can offer you only sick men's dreams.

And truly the whole state of sickness is such; for what else is it but a magnificent dream for a man to lie a-bed, and draw daylight curtains about him; and, shutting out the sun, to induce a total oblivion of all the works which are going on under it? To become insensible to all the operations of life, except the beatings of one feeble pulse?

If there be a regal solitude, it is a sick-bed. How the patient lords it there! what caprices he acts without control! how king-like he sways his pillow—tumbling, and tossing, and shifting, and lowering, and thumping, and flatting, and moulding it, to the ever-varying requisitions of his throbbing temples.

He changes *sides* oftener than a politician. Now he lies full length, then half-length, obliquely, transversely, head and feet quite across the bed; and none accuses him of tergiversation. Within the four curtains he is absolute. They are his Mare Clausum.

How sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself! he is his

own exclusive object. Supreme selfishness is inculcated upon him as his only duty. 'Tis the Two Tables of the Law to him. He has nothing to think of but how to get well. What passes out of doors, or within them, so he hear not the jarring of them, affects him not.

A little while ago he was greatly concerned in the event of a law-suit, which was to be the making or the marring of his dearest friend. He was to be seen trudging about upon this man's errand to fifty quarters of the town at once, jogging this witness, refreshing that solicitor. The cause was to come on yesterday. He is absolutely as indifferent to the decision, as if it were a question to be tried at Pekin. Peradventure from some whispering, going on about the house, not intended for his hearing, he picks up enough to make him understand, that things went cross-grained in the Court yesterday, and his friend is ruined. But the word "friend," and the word "ruin," disturb him no more than so much jargon. He is not to think of anything but how to get better.

What a world of foreign cares are merged in that absorbing consideration!

He has put on the strong armour of sickness, he is wrapped in the callous hide of suffering; he keeps his sympathy, like some curious vintage, under trusty lock and key, for his own use only.

He lies pitying himself, honing and moaning to himself; he yearneth over himself; his bowels are even melted within him, to think what he suffers; he is not ashamed to weep over himself.

He is for ever plotting how to do some good to himself; studying little stratagems and artificial alleviations.

He makes the most of himself; dividing himself, by an allowable fiction, into as many distinct individuals, as he hath sore and sorrowing members. Sometimes he meditates—as of a thing apart from him—upon his poor aching head, and that dull pain which, dozing or waking, lay in it all the past night like a log, or palpable substance of pain, not to be removed without opening the very skull, as it seemed, to take it thence. Or he pities his long, clammy, attenuated fingers. He compassionates himself all over; and his bed is a very discipline of humanity and tender heart.

He is his own sympathizer; and instinctively feels that none can so well perform that office for him. He cares for few spectators to his tragedy. Only that punctual face of the old nurse pleases him, that announces his broths, and his cordials. He likes it because it is so unmoved, and because he can pour forth his feverish ejaculations before it as unreservedly as to his bed-post.

To the world's business he is dead. He understands not what the callings and occupations of mortals are; only he has a glimmering conceit of some such thing, when the doctor makes his daily call; and even in the lines of that busy face he reads no multiplicity of patients, but solely conceives of himself as *the sick man*. To what other uneasy couch the good man is hastening, when he slips out of his chamber, folding up his thin douceur so carefully for fear of rustling—is no speculation which he can at present entertain. He thinks only of the regular return of the same phenomenon at the same hour to-morrow.

Household rumours touch him not. Some faint murmur, indicative of life going on within the house, soothes him, while he knows not distinctly what it is. He is not to know anything, not to think of anything. Servants gliding up or down the distant staircase, treading as upon velvet, gently keep his ear awake, so long as he troubles not himself further than with some feeble guess at their errands. Exacter knowledge would be a burden to him: he can just endure the pressure of conjecture. He opens his eye faintly at the dull stroke of the muffled knocker, and closes it again without asking "Who was it?" He is flattered by a general notion that inquiries are making after him, but he cares not to know the name of the inquirer. In the general stillness, and awful hush of the house, he lies in state, and feels his sovereignty.

To be sick is to enjoy monarchal prerogatives. Compare the silent tread, and quiet ministry, almost by the eye, with which he is served—with the careless demeanour, the unceremonious goings in and out (slapping of doors, or leaving them open) of the very same attendants, when he is getting a little better—and you will confess, that from the bed of sickness (throne let me rather call it) to the elbow chair of convalescence, is a fall from dignity, amounting to a deposition.

How convalescence shrinks a man back to his pristine stature! where is now the space, which he occupied so lately, in his own, in the family's eye? The scene of his regalities, his sick room, which was his presence chamber, where he lay and acted his despotic fancies—how is it reduced to a common bedroom! The trimness of the very bed has something petty and unmeaning about it. It is *made* every day. How unlike to that wavy, many-furrowed, oceanic surface which it presented so short a time since, when to *make* it was a service not to be thought of at oftener than three or four day revolutions, when the patient was with pain and grief to be lifted for a little while out of it, to submit to the encroachments of unwelcome neatness, and decencies which his shaken frame deprecated; then to be lifted into it again, for another three or four days' respite, to flounder it out of shape again, while every fresh furrow was an historical record of some shifting posture, some uneasy turning, some seeking for a little ease; and the shrunken skin scarce told a truer story than the crumpled coverlid.

Hushed are those mysterious sighs—those groans—so much more awful, while we knew not from what caverns of vast hidden suffering they proceeded. The Lernean pangs are quenched. The riddle of sickness is solved; and Philoctetes is become an ordinary personage.

Perhaps some relic of the sick man's dream of greatness survives in the still lingering visitations of the medical attendant. But how is he too changed with everything else! Can this be he—this man of news—of chat—of anecdote—of everything but physic—can this be he who so lately came between the patient and his cruel enemy, as on some solemn embassy from nature, erecting herself into a high mediating party?—Pshaw! 'tis some old woman.

Farewell with him all that made sickness pompous - the spell that hushed the household—the desert-like stillness, felt through its inmost chambers—the mute attendance—the inquiry by looks—the still softer delicacies of self attention—the sole and single eye of distemper alonely fixed upon itself—world thoughts excluded—the man a world unto himself—his own theatre—

What a speck is he dwindled into!

In this flat swamp of convalescence, left by the ebb of sickness, yet far enough from the terra firma of established health, your note, dear Editor, reached me, requesting—an article. In *Articulo Mortis* thought I; but it is something hard—and the quibble, wretched as it was, relieved me. The summons, unseasonable as it appeared, seemed to link me on again to the petty businesses of life, which I had lost sight of; a gentle call to activity, however trivial: a wholesome weaning from that preposterous dream of self-absorption—the puffy state of sickness—In which I confess to have lain so long, insensible to the magazines and monarchies, of the world alike; to its laws, and to its literature. The hypochondriac flatus is subsiding; the acres, which in imagination I had spread over—for the sick man swells in the sole contemplation of his single sufferings, till he becomes a Tityus to himself are wasting to a span; and for the giant of self-importanee, which I was so lately, you have me once again in my natural pretensions—the lean and meagre figure of your insignificant Essayist.

# Stage Illusion.

(*The London Magazine*, August, 1825.)

A PLAY is said to be well or ill acted in proportion to the scenical illusion produced. Whether such illusion can in any case be perfect, is not the question. The nearest approach to it, we are told, is, when the actor appears wholly unconscious of the presence of spectators. In tragedy—in all which is to affect the feelings—this undivided attention to his stage business, seems indispensable. Yet it is, in fact, dispensed with every day by our cleverist tragedians; and while these references to an audience, in the shape of rant or sentiment, are not too frequent or palpable, a sufficient quantity of illusion for the purposes of dramatic interest may be said to be produced in spite of them. But, tragedy apart, it may be inquired whether, in certain characters in comedy, especially those which are a little extravagant, or which involve some notion repugnant to the moral sense, it is not a proof of the highest skill in the comedian when, without absolutely appealing to an audience, he keeps up a tacit understanding with them; and makes them, unconsciously to themselves, a party in the scene. The utmost nicety is required in the mode of doing this; but we speak only of the great artists in the profession.

The most mortifying infirmity in human nature, to feel in ourselves, or to contemplate in another, is, perhaps, cowardice. To see a coward *done to the life* upon a stage would produce anything but mirth. Yet we most of us remember Jack Bannister's cowards. Could anything be more agreeable, more pleasant? We loved the rogues. How was this effected but by the exquisite art of the actor in a perpetual subinsinuation to us, the spectators, even in the extremity of the shaking fit, that he was not half such a coward as we took him for? We saw all the common symptoms of the malady upon him; the quivering lip, the cowering knees, the teeth chattering; and could have sworn "that man was frightened." But we forgot all the while—or kept it almost a secret to ourselves—that he never once lost his self-possession; that he let out by a thousand droll looks and gestures—meant at *us*, and not at all supposed to be visible to his fellows in the scene, that his confidence in his own resources had never once deserted him. Was this a genuine picture of a coward? or not rather a likeness, which the clever artist contrived to palm upon us instead of an original; while we secretly connived at the delusion for the purpose of greater pleasure, than a more genuine counterfeiting of the imbecility, helplessness, and utter self-desertion, which we know to be concomitants of cowardice in real life, could have given us.

Why are misers so hateful in the world, and so endurable on the stage, but because the skilful actor, by a sort of sub-reference, rather than direct appeal to us, disarms the character of a great deal of its odiousness, by seeming to engage *our* compassion for the insecure tenure by which he holds his money bags and parchments? By this subtle vent half of the hatefulness of the character—the self-closeness with which in real life it coils itself up from the sympathies of men evaporates. The miser becomes sympathetic, *i.e.*, is no genuine miser. Here again a diverting likeness is substituted for a very disagreeable reality.

Spleen, irritability—the pitiable infirmities of old men, which produce only pain to behold in the realities, counterfeited upon a stage, divert not altogether

for the comic appendages to them, but in part from an inner conviction that they are *being acted* before us; that a likeness only is going on, and not the thing itself. They please by being done under the life, or beside it; not *to the life.* When Gatty acts an old man, is he angry indeed? or only a pleasant counterfeit, just enough of a likeness to recognize, without pressing upon us the uneasy sense of reality?

Comedians, paradoxical as it may seem, may be too natural. It was the case with a late actor. Nothing could be more earnest or true than the manner of Mr. Emery; this told excellently in his Tyke, and characters of a tragic cast. But when he carried the same rigid exclusiveness of attention to the stage business, and wilful blindness and oblivion of everything before the curtain into his comedy, it produced a harsh and dissonant effect. He was out of keeping with the rest of the *Personæ Dramatis.* There was as little link between him and them as betwixt himself and the audience. He was a third estate, dry, repulsive, and unsocial to all. Individually considered, his execution was masterly. But comedy is not this unbending thing; for this reason, that the same degree of credibility is not required of it as to serious scenes. The degrees of credibility demanded to the two things may be illustrated by the different sort of truth which we expect when a man tells us a mournful or a merry story. If we suspect the former of falsehoods in any one tittle, we reject it altogether. Our tears refuse to flow at a suspected imposition. But the teller of a mirthful tale has latitude allowed him. We are content with less than absolute truth. 'Tis the same with dramatic illusion. We confess we love in comedy to see an audience naturalized behind the scenes, taken in into the interest of the drama, welcomed as bystanders however. There is something ungracious in a comic actor holding himself aloof from all participation or concern with those who are come to be diverted by him. Macbeth must see the dagger, and no ear but his own be told of it; but an old fool in farce may think he *sees something*, and by conscious words and looks express it, as plainly as he can speak, to pit, box, and gallery. When an impertinent in tragedy, an Osric, for instance, breaks in upon the serious passions of the scene, we approve of the contempt with which he is treated. But when the pleasant impertinent of comedy, in a piece purely meant to give delight, and raise mirth out of whimsical perplexities, worries the studious man with taking up his leisure, or making his house his home, the same sort of contempt expressed (however *natural*) would destroy the balance of delight in the spectators. To make the intrusion comic, the actor who plays the annoyed man must a little desert nature; he must, in short, be thinking of the audience, and express only so much dissatisfaction and peevishness as is consistent with the pleasure of comedy. In other words, his perplexity must seem half put on. If he repel the intruder with the sober-set face of a man in earnest, and more especially if he deliver his expostulations in a tone which in the world must necessarily provoke a duel; his real-life manner will destroy the whimsical and purely dramatic existence of the other character (which to render it comic demands an antagonist comicality on the part of the character opposed to it, and convert what was meant for mirth, rather than belief, into a downright piece of impertinence indeed, which would raise no diversion in us, but rather stir pain, to see inflicted in earnest upon any unworthy person. A very judicious actor (in most of his parts) seems to have fallen into an error of this sort in his playing with Mr. Wrench in the Farce of *Free and Easy.*

Many instances would be tedious; these may suffice to show that comic acting at least does not always demand from the performer that strict abstraction from all reference to an audience, which is exacted of it; but that in some cases a sort of compromise may take place, and all the purposes of dramatic delight be attained by a judicious understanding, not too openly announced, between the ladies and gentlemen—on both sides of the curtain.

# The Genteel Style in Writing.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, March, 1826.)

[When this paper was originally published in the *New Monthly*, it appeared as the fourteenth of the Popular Fallacies, under the heading "That my Lord Shaftesbury and Sir William Temple are models of the Genteel Style of Writing."]

IT is an ordinary criticism, that my Lord Shaftesbury, and Sir William Temple, are models of the genteel style in writing. We should prefer saying—of the lordly, and the gentlemanly. Nothing can be more unlike than the inflated finical rhapsodies of Shaftesbury, and the plain natural chit-chat of Temple. The man of rank is discernible in both writers; but in the one it is only insinuated gracefully, in the other it stands out offensively. The peer seems to have written with his coronet on, and the Earl's mantle before him; the commoner in his elbow chair and undressed.—What can be more pleasant than the way in which the retired statesman peeps out in the essays, penned by the latter in his delightful retreat at Shene? They scent of Nimeguen, and the Hague. Scarce an authority is quoted under an ambassador. Don Francisco de Melo, a "Portugal Envoy in England," tells him it was frequent in his country for men, spent with age or other decays, so as they could not hope for above a year or two of life, to ship themselves away in a Brazil fleet, and after their arrival there to go on a great length, sometimes for twenty or thirty years, or more, by the force of that vigour they recovered with that remove. "Whether such an effect" (Temple beautifully adds) "might grow from the air, or the fruits of that climate, or by approaching nearer the sun, which is the fountain of light and heat, when their natural heat was so far decayed: or whether the piecing out of an old man's life were worth the pains; I cannot tell: perhaps the play is not worth the candle."—Monsieur Pompone, "French Ambassador in his (Sir William's) time at the Hague," certifies him, that in his life he had never heard of any man in France that arrived at a hundred years of age; a limitation of life which the old gentleman imputes to the excellence of their climate, giving them such a liveliness of temper and humour, as disposes them to more pleasures of all kinds than in other countries; and moralizes upon the matter very sensibly. The "late Robert Earl of Leicester" furnishes him with a story of a Countess of Desmond, married out of England in Edward the Fourth's time, and who lived far in King James's reign. The "same noble person" gives him an account, how such a year, in the same reign, there went about the country a set of morrice-dancers, composed of ten men who danced, a Maid Marian, and a tabor and pipe; and how these twelve, one with another, made up twelve hundred years. "It was not so much" (says Temple) "that so many in one small county (Herefordshire) should live to that age, as that they should be in vigour and in humour to travel and to dance." Monsieur Zulichem, one of his "colleagues at the Hague," informs him of a cure for the gout; which is confirmed by another "Envoy," Monsieur Serinchamps, in that town, who had tried it.—Old Prince Maurice of Nassau recommends to him the use of hammocks in that complaint; having been allured to sleep, while suffering under it himself, by the "constant motion or swinging of those airy beds." Count Egmont, and the Rhinegrave who "was killed last summer before Maestricht," impart to him their experiences.

But the rank of the writer is never more innocently disclosed, than where he takes for granted the compliments paid by foreigners to his fruit-trees. For the taste and perfection of what we esteem the best, he can truly say, that the French, who have eaten his peaches and grapes at Shene in no very ill year, have generally concluded that the last are as good as any they have eaten in France on this side Fontainebleau; and the first as good as any they have eat in Gascony. Italians have agreed his white figs to be as good as any of that sort in Italy, which is the earlier kind of white fig there; for in the later kind and the blue, we cannot come near the warm climates, no more than in the Frontignac or Muscat grape. His orange trees, too, are as large as any he saw when he was young in France, except those of Fontainebleau, or what he has seen in the Low Countries; except some very old ones of the Prince of Orange's. Of grapes he had the honour of bringing over four sorts into England, which he enumerates, and supposes that they are all by this time pretty common among some gardeners in his neighbourhood, as well as several persons of quality; for he ever thought all things of this kind "the commoner they are made the better." The garden pedantry with which he asserts that 'tis to little purpose to plant any of the best fruits, as peaches or grapes, hardly, he doubts, beyond Northamptonshire at the farthest northwards; and praises the "Bishop of Munster at Cosevelt," for attempting nothing beyond cherries in that cold climate; is equally pleasant and in character. "I may perhaps" (he thus ends his sweet Garden Essay with a passage worthy of Cowley) "be allowed to know something of this trade, since I have so long allowed myself to be good for nothing else, which few men will do, or enjoy their gardens, without often looking abroad to see how other matters play, what motions in the state, and what invitations they may hope for into other scenes. For my own part, as the country life, and this part of it more particularly, were the inclination of my youth itself, so they are the pleasure of my age; and I can truly say that, among many great employments that have fallen to my share, I have never asked or sought for any of them, but have often endeavoured to escape from them, into the ease and freedom of a private scene, where a man may go his own way and his own pace, in the common paths and circles of life. The measure of choosing well is whether a man likes what he has chosen, which I thank God has befallen me; and though among the follies of my life, building and planting have not been the least, and have cost me more than I have the confidence to own; yet they have been fully recompensed by the sweetness and satisfaction of this retreat, where, since my resolution taken of never entering again into any public employments, I have passed five years without ever once going to town, though I am almost in sight of it, and have a house there always ready to receive me. Nor has this been any sort of affectation, as some have thought it, but a mere want of desire or humour to make so small a remove; for when I am in this corner, I can truly say with Horace, *Me quoties reficit*, &c.

"Me when the cold Digentian stream revives,
What does my friend believe I think or ask?
Let me yet less possess, so I may live,
Whate'er of life remains, unto myself.
May I have books enough; and one year's store,
Not to depend upon each doubtful hour:
This is enough of mighty Jove to pray,
Who, as he pleases, gives and takes away."

The writings of Temple are, in general, after this easy copy. On one occasion, indeed, his wit, which was mostly subordinate to nature and tenderness, has seduced him into a string of felicitous antitheses; which, it is obvious to remark, have been a model to Addison and succeeding essayists. "Who would not be covetous, and with reason," he says, "if health could be purchased

with gold? who not ambitious if it were at the command of power, or restored by honour? but, alas! a white staff will not help gouty feet to walk better than a common cane; nor a blue riband bind up a wound so well as a fillet. The glitter of gold or of diamonds, will but hurt sore eyes instead of curing them; and an aching head will be no more eased by wearing a crown, than a common night-cap." In a far better style, and more accordance with his own humour of plainness, are the concluding sentences of his "Discourse upon Poetry." Temple took a part in the controversy about the ancient and the modern learning; and, with that partiality so natural and so graceful in an old man, whose state engagements had left him little leisure to look into modern productions, while his retirement gave him occasion to look back upon the classic studies of his youth—decided in favour of the latter. "Certain it is," he says, "that, whether the fierceness of the Gothic humours, or noise of their perpetual wars, frighted it away, or that the unequal mixture of the modern languages would not bear it—the great heights and excellency both of poetry and music fell with the Roman learning and empire, and have never since recovered the admiration and applauses that before attended them. Yet, such as they are amongst us, they must be confessed to be the softest and sweetest, the most general and most innocent amusements of common time and life. They still find room in the courts of princes, and the cottages of shepherds. They serve to revive and animate the dead calm of poor and idle lives, and to allay or divert the violent passions and perturbations of the greatest and the busiest men. And both these effects are of equal use to human life; for the mind of man is like the sea, which is neither agreeable to the beholder nor the voyager, in a calm or in a storm, but is so to both when a little agitated by gentle gales; and so the mind, when moved by soft and easy passions or affections. I know very well that many who pretend to be wise by the forms of being grave, are apt to despise both poetry and music, as toys and trifles too light for the use or entertainment of serious men. But whoever find themselves wholly insensible to their charms, would, I think, do well to keep their own counsel, for fear of reproaching their own temper, and bringing the goodness of their natures, if not of their understandings, into question. While this world lasts, I doubt not but the pleasure and request of these two entertainments will do so too; and happy those that content themselves with these, or any other so easy and so innocent, and do not trouble the world or other men, because they cannot be quiet themselves, though nobody hurts them." "When all is done" (he concludes), "human life is at the greatest and the best but like a froward child, that must be played with, and humoured a little, to keep it quiet, till it falls asleep, and then the care is over."

## Sanity of True Genius.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, May, 1826.)

[As originally published in the *New Monthly*, this paper appeared as the seventeenth of the Popular Fallacies, under the heading "That Great Wit is allied to Madness."]

So far from the position holding true, that great wit (or genius, in our modern way of speaking) has a necessary alliance with insanity, the greatest

wits, on the contrary, will ever be found to be the sanest writers. It is impossible for the mind to conceive of a mad Shakspere. The greatness of wit, by which the poetic talent is here chiefly to be understood, manifests itself in the admirable balance of all the faculties. Madness is the disproportionate straining or excess of any one of them. "So strong a wit," says Cowley, speaking of a poetical friend,

> " —— did Nature to him frame,
> As all things but his judgment overcame,
> His judgment like the heavenly moon did show
> Tempering that mighty sea below."

The ground of the mistake is, that men, finding in the raptures of the higher poetry a condition of exaltation, to which they have no parallel in their own experience, besides the spurious resemblance of it in dreams and fevers, impute a state of dreaminess and fever to the poet. But the true poet dreams being awake. He is not possessed by his subject, but has dominion over it. In the groves of Eden he walks familiar as in his native paths. He ascends the empyrean heaven, and is not intoxicated. He treads the burning marl without dismay; he wins his flight without self-loss through realms of chaos "and old night." Or if, abandoning himself to that severer chaos of a "human mind untuned," he is content awhile to be mad with Lear, or to hate mankind (a sort of madness) with Timon, neither is that madness, nor this misanthropy, so unchecked, but that,—never letting the reins of reason wholly go, while most he seems to do so,—he has his better genius still whispering at his ear, with the good servant Kent suggesting saner counsels, or with the honest steward Flavius recommending kindlier resolutions. Where he seems most to recede from humanity, he will be found the truest to it. From beyond the scope of Nature if he summon possible existences, he subjugates them to the law of her consistency. He is beautifully loyal to that sovereign directress, even when he appears most to betray and desert her. His ideal tribes submit to policy; his very monsters are tamed to his hand, even as that wild sea-brood shepherded by Proteus. He tames, and he clothes them with attributes of flesh and blood till they wonder at themselves, like Indian Islanders forced to submit to European vesture. Caliban, the Witches, are as true to the laws of their own nature (ours with a difference), as Othello, Hamlet, and Macbeth. Herein the great and the little wits are differenced; that if the latter wander ever so little from nature or actual existence, they lose themselves and their readers. Their phantoms are lawless; their visions nightmares. They do not create, which implies shaping and consistency. Their imaginations are not active—for to be active is to call something into act and form—but passive, as men in sick dreams. For the supernatural, or something superadded to what we know of nature, they give you the plainly non-natural. And if this were all, and that these mental hallucinations were discoverable only in the treatment of subjects out of nature, or transcending it, the judgment might with some plea be pardoned if it ran riot, and a little wantonized: but even in the describing of real and every-day life, that which is before their eyes, one of these lesser wits shall more deviate from nature—show more of that inconsequence, which has a natural alliance with frenzy,—than a great genius in his "maddest fits," as Withers somewhere calls them. We appeal to any one who is acquainted with the common run of Lane's novels,—as they existed some twenty or thirty years back—those scanty intellectual viands of the whole female reading public, till a happier genius arose, and expelled for ever the innutritious phantoms,—whether he has not found his brain more "betossed," his memory more puzzled, his sense of when and where more confounded, among the improbable events, the incoherent incidents, the inconsistent characters, or no characters, of some third-rate love intrigue—where the persons shall be a Lord Glendamour and a Miss

Rivers, and the scene only alternate between Bath and Bond Street—a more bewildering dreaminess induced upon him, than he has felt wandering over all the fairy grounds of Spenser. In the productions we refer to, nothing but names and places is familiar; the persons are neither of this world nor of any other conceivable one; an endless string of activities without purpose, of purposes destitute of motive:—we meet phantoms in our known walks; *fantasques* only christened. In the poet we have names which announce fiction; and we have absolutely no place at all, for the things and persons of the Faërie Queene prate not of their "whereabout." But in their inner nature, and the law of their speech and actions, we are at home and upon acquainted ground. The one turns life into a dream; the other to the wildest dreams gives the sobrieties of every-day occurrences. By what subtile art of tracing the mental processes it is effected, we are not philosophers enough to explain, but in that wonderful episode of the cave of Mammon, in which the Money God appears first in the lowest form of a miser, is then a worker of metals, and becomes the god of all the treasures of the world; and has a daughter, Ambition, before whom all the world kneels for favours—with the Hesperian fruit, the waters of Tantalus, with Pilate washing his hands vainly, but not impertinently, in the same stream—that we should be at one moment in the cave of an old hoarder of treasures, at the next at the forge of the Cyclops, in a palace and yet in hell, all at once, with the shifting mutations of the most rambling dream, and our judgment yet all the time awake, and neither able nor willing to detect the fallacy,—is a proof of that hidden sanity which still guides the poet in his wildest seeming aberrations.

It is not enough to say that the whole episode is a copy of the mind's conceptions in sleep; it is, in some sort—but what a copy! Let the most romantic of us, that has been entertained all night with the spectacle of some wild and magnificent vision, recombine it in the morning, and try it by his waking judgment. That which appeared so shifting, and yet so coherent, while that faculty was passive, when it comes under cool examination, shall appear so reasonless and so unlinked, that we are ashamed to have been so deluded; and to have taken, though but in sleep, a monster for a god. But the transitions in this episode are every whit as violent as in the most extravagant dream, and yet the waking judgment ratifies them.

# To the Shade of Elliston.

(*The Englishman's Magazine*, August, 1831.)

JOYOUSEST of once embodied spirits, whither at length hast thou flown? to what genial region are we permitted to conjecture that thou hast flitted?

Art thou sowing thy WILD OATS yet (the harvest time was still to come with thee) upon casual sands of Avernus? or art thou enacting ROVER (as we would gladlier think) by wandering Elysian streams?

This mortal frame, while thou didst play thy brief antics amongst us, was in truth anything but a prison to thee, as the vain Platonist dreams of this *body* to be no better than a county gaol, forsooth, or some house of durance vile,

whereof the five senses are the fetters. Thou knowest better than to be in a hurry to cast off those gyves; and hadst notice to quit, I fear, before thou wert quite ready to abandon this fleshy tenement. It was thy Pleasure House, thy Palace of Dainty Devices; thy Louvre, or thy White Hall.

What new mysterious lodgings dost thou tenant now? or when may we expect thy aërial house-warming?

Tartarus we know, and we have read of the Blessed Shades; now cannot I intelligibly fancy thee in either.

Is it too much to hazard a conjecture, that (as the schoolmen admitted a receptacle apart for Patriarchs and un-chrisom Babes) there may exist—not far perchance from that storehouse of all vanities, which Milton saw in visions—a LIMBO somewhere for PLAYERS? and that

> Up thither like aërial vapours fly
> Both all Stage things, and all that in Stage things
> Built their fond hopes of glory, or lasting fame!
> All the unaccomplish'd works of Authors' hands,
> Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
> Damn'd upon earth, fleet thither—
> Play, Opera, Farce, with all their trumpery.—

There, by the neighbouring moon (by some not improperly supposed thy Regent Planet upon earth) mayst thou not still be acting thy managerial pranks, great disembodied Lessee? but Lessee still, and still a Manager.

In Green Rooms, impervious to mortal eye, the muse beholds thee wielding posthumous empire.

Thin ghosts of Figurantes (never plump on earth) circle thee in endlessly, and still their song is *Fye on sinful Phantasy.*

Magnificent were thy capriccios on this globe of earth, ROBERT WILLIAM ELLISTON! for as yet we know not thy new name in heaven.

It irks me to think, that, stripped of thy regalities, thou shouldst ferry over, a poor forked shade, in crazy Stygian wherry. Methinks I hear the old boatman, paddling by the weedy wharf, with raucid voice, bawling "SCULLS, SCULLS:" to which, with waving hand, and majestic action, thou deignest no reply, other than in two curt monosyllables, "NO: OARS."

But the laws of Pluto's kingdom know small difference between king, and cobbler; manager, and call-boy; and, if haply your dates of life were conterminant, you are quietly taking your passage, cheek by cheek (O ignoble levelling of Death) with the shade of some recently departed candle-snuffer.

But mercy! what strippings, what tearing off of histrionic robes, and private vanities! what denudations to the bone, before the surly Ferryman will admit you to set a foot within his battered lighter!

Crowns, sceptres; shield, sword, and truncheon; thy own coronation robes (for thou hast brought the whole property man's wardrobe with thee, enough to sink a navy); the judge's ermine; the coxcomb's wig; the snuff-box *à la Foppington*—all must overboard, he positively swears—and that ancient mariner brooks no denial; for, since the tiresome monodrame of the old Thracian Harper, Charon, it is to be believed, hath shown small taste for theatricals.

Ay, now 'tis done. You are just boat weight; *pura et puta anima.*

But bless me, how *little* you look.

So shall we all look—kings, and kaisers—stripped for the last voyage.

But the murky rogue pushes off. Adieu, pleasant, and thrice pleasant shade! with my parting thanks for many a heavy hour of life lightened by thy harmless extravaganzas, public or domestic.

Rhadamanthus, who tries the lighter causes below, leaving to his two brethren the heavy calendars—honest Rhadamanth, always partial to players, weighing their parti-coloured existence here upon earth,—making account of the few

foibles, that may have shaded thy *real life*, as we call it (though, substantially, scarcely less a vapour than thy idlest vagaries upon the boards of Drury), as but of so many echoes, natural repercussions, and results to be expected from the assumed extravagancies of thy *secondary* or *mock life*, nightly upon a stage —after a lenient castigation, with rods lighter than of those Medusean ringlets, but just enough to "whip the offending Adam out of thee"—shall courteously dismiss thee at the right-hand gate—the O. P. side of Hades—that conducts to masques, and merry-makings, in the Theatre Royal of Proserpine.

PLAUDITO, ET VALETO.

[*Thy friend upon earth,*
Though thou didst connive at his d——n.
Mr. H.]

## Ellistoniana.

(*The Englishman's Magazine*, August, 1831.)

["G. D." was George Dyer, and "Sir A—— C——," Sir Anthony Carlisle, the eminent surgeon, already referred to, (*vide supra*, p. 379) in the note prefixed to the essay on Imperfect Sympathies.]

My acquaintance with the pleasant creature, whose loss we all deplore, was but slight.

My first introduction to E., which afterwards ripened into an acquaintance a little on this side of intimacy, was over a counter of the Leamington Spa Library, then newly entered upon by a branch of his family, E., whom nothing misbecame—to auspicate, I suppose, the filial concern, and set it a-going with a lustre—was serving in person two damsels fair, who had come into the shop ostensibly to inquire for some new publication, but in reality to have a sight of the illustrious shopman, hoping some conference. With what an air did he reach down the volume, dispassionately giving his opinion upon the worth of the work in question, and launching out into a dissertation on its comparative merits with those of certain publications of a similar stamp, its rivals! his enchanted customers fairly hanging on his lips, subdued to their authoritative sentence. So have I seen a gentleman in comedy *acting* the shopman. So Lovelace sold his gloves in King Street. I admired the histrionic art, by which he contrived to carry clean away every notion of disgrace, from the occupation he had so generously submitted to; and from that hour I judged him, with no after repentance, to be a person, with whom it would be a felicity to be more acquainted.

To descant upon his merits as a Comedian would be superfluous. With his blended private and professional habits alone I have to do; that harmonious fusion of the manners of the player into those of every-day life, which brought the stage boards into streets, and dining-parlours, and kept up the play when the play was ended.—"I like Wrench," a friend was saying to him one day, "because he is the same natural, easy creature, *on* the stage, that he is *off*." "My case exactly," retorted Elliston—with a charming forgetfulness, that the converse of a proposition does not always lead to the same conclusion—"I am the same person *off* the stage that I am *on*." The inference, at first sight, seems identical; but examine it a little, and it confesses only, that the one performer was never, and the other always, *acting*.

And in truth this was the charm of Elliston's private deportment. You had a spirited performance always going on before your eyes, with nothing to pay. As where a monarch takes up his casual abode for a night, the poorest hovel which he honours by his sleeping in it, becomes *ipso facto* for that time a palace; so wherever Elliston walked, sate, or stood still, there was the theatre. He carried about with him his pit, boxes, and galleries, and set up his portable playhouse at corners of streets, and in the market-places. Upon flintiest pavements he trod the boards still; and if his theme chanced to be passionate, the green baize carpet of tragedy spontaneously rose beneath his feet. Now this was hearty, and showed a love for his art. So Apelles *always* painted—in thought. So G. D. *always* poetises. I hate a lukewarm artist. I have known actors—and some of them of Elliston's own stamp—who shall have agreeably been amusing you in the part of a rake or a coxcomb, through the two or three hours of their dramatic existence; but no sooner does the curtain fall with its leaden clatter, but a spirit of lead seems to seize on all their faculties. They emerge sour, morose persons, intolerable to their families, servants, &c. Another shall have been expanding your heart with generous deeds and sentiments, till it even beats with yearnings of universal sympathy; you absolutely long to go home, and do some good action. The play seems tedious, till you can get fairly out of the house, and realize your laudable intentions. At length the final bell rings, and this cordial representative or all that is amiable in human breasts steps forth—a miser. Elliston was more of a piece. Did he *play* Ranger? and did Ranger fill the general bosom of the town with satisfaction? why should *he* not be Ranger, and diffuse the same cordial satisfaction among his private circles? with *his* temperament, *his* animal spirits, *his* good-nature, *his* follies perchance, could he do better than identify himself with his impersonation? Are we to like a pleasant rake, or coxcomb, on the stage, and give ourselves airs of aversion for the identical character presented to us in actual life? or what would the performer have gained by divesting himself of the impersonation? Could the man Elliston have been essentially different from his part, even if he had avoided to reflect to us studiously, in private circles, the airy briskness, the forwardness, and scapegoat trickeries of his prototype?

"But there is something not natural in this everlasting *acting;* we want the real man."

Are you quite sure that it is not the man himself, whom you cannot, or will not see, under some adventitious trappings, which, nevertheless, sit not at all inconsistently upon him. What if it is the nature of some men to be highly artificial? The fault is least reprehensible in *players*. Cibber was his own Foppington, with almost as much wit as Vanbrugh could add to it.

"My conceit of his person,"—it is Ben Jonson speaking of Lord Bacon,—"was never increased towards him by his *place* or *honours*. But I have, and do reverence him for the *greatness*, that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever one of the *greatest* men, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that heaven would give him strength; for *greatness* he could not want."

The quality here commended was scarcely less conspicuous in the subject of these idle reminiscences, than in my Lord Verulam. Those who have imagined that an unexpected elevation to the direction of a great London Theatre, affected the consequence of Elliston, or at all changed his nature, knew not the essential *greatness* of the man whom they disparage. It was my fortune to encounter him near St. Dunstan's Church (which, with its punctual giants, is now no more than dust and a shadow), on the morning of his election to that high office. Grasping my hand with a look of significance, he only uttered,—"Have you heard the news?"—then with another look following up the blow, he subjoined, "I am the future Manager of Drury Lane Theatre."—Breathless as he saw me, he stayed not for congratulation or reply, but mutely stalked

away, leaving me to chew upon his new-blown dignities at leisure. In fact, nothing could be said to it. Expressive silence alone could muse his praise. This was in his *great* style.

But was he less *great* (be witness, O ye Powers of Equanimity, that supported in the ruins of Carthage the consular exile, and more recently transmuted for a more illustrious exile, the barren constableship of Elba into an image of Imperial France), when, in melancholy after-years, again, much nearer the same spot, I met him, when that sceptre had been wrested from his hand, and his dominion was curtailed to the petty managership, and part proprietorship, of the small Olympic, *his Elba*? He still played nightly upon the boards of Drury, but in parts alas! allotted to him, not magnificently distributed by him. Waiving his great loss as nothing, and magnificently sinking the sense of fallen *material* grandeur in the more liberal resentment of depreciations done to his more lofty *intellectual* pretensions, "Have you heard" (his customary exordium)—"have you heard," said he, "how they treat me? they put me in *comedy*." Thought I—but his finger on his lips forbade any verbal interruption—"Where could they have put you better?" Then, after a pause—"Where I formerly played Romeo, I now play Mercutio,"—and so again he stalked away, neither staying, nor caring for, responses.

O, it was a rich scene,—but Sir A—— C——, the best of story-tellers and surgeons, who mends a lame narrative almost as well as he sets a fracture, alone could do justice to it—that I was witness to, in the tarnished room (that had once been green) of that same little Olympic. There, after his deposition from Imperial Drury, he substituted a throne. That Olympic Hill was his "highest heaven;" himself "Jove in his chair." There he sat in state, while before him, on complaint of prompter, was brought for judgment—how shall I describe her?—one of those little tawdry things that flirt at the tails of choruses—a probationer for the town, in either of its senses—the prettiest little drab—a dirty fringe and appendage of the lamps' smoke—who, it seems, on some disapprobation expressed by a "highly respectable" audience, had precipitately quitted her station on the boards, and withdrawn her small talents in disgust.

"And how dare you," said her Manager—assuming a sensorial severity which would have crushed the confidence of a Vestris, and disarmed that beautiful Rebel herself of her professional caprices—I verily believe, he thought *her* standing before him—"how dare you, madam, withdraw yourself, without a notice from your theatrical duties?" "I was hissed, sir." "And you have the presumption to decide upon the taste of the town?" "I don't know that, sir, but I will never stand to be hissed," was the subjoinder of young Confidence—when gathering up his features into one insignificant mass of wonder, pity, and expostulatory indignation—in a lesson never to have been lost upon a creature less forward than she who stood before him—his words were these: "They have hissed *me*."

'Twas the identical argument *à fortiori*, which the son of Peleus uses to Lycaon trembling under his lance, to persuade him to take his destiny with a good grace. "I too am mortal." And it is to be believed that in both cases the rhetoric missed of its application, for want of a proper understanding with the faculties of the respective recipients.

"Quite an Opera pit," he said to me, as he was courteously conducting me over the benches of his Surrey Theatre, the last retreat, and recess, of his every-day waning grandeur.

Those who knew Elliston, will know the *manner* in which he pronounced the latter sentence of the few words I am about to record. One proud day to me he took his roast mutton with us in the Temple, to which I had superadded a preliminary haddock. After a rather plentiful partaking of the meagre banquet, not unrefreshed with the humbler sort of liquors, I made a sort of apology for

the humility of the fare, observing that for my own part I never ate but of one dish at dinner. "I too never eat but one thing at dinner"—was his reply—then after a pause—"reckoning fish as nothing" The manner was all. It was as if by one peremptory sentence he had decreed the annihilation of all the savory esculents, which the pleasant and nutritious-food-giving Ocean pours forth upon poor humans from her watery bosom. This was *greatness*, tempered with considerate *tenderness* to the feelings of his scanty but welcoming entertainer.

*Great* wert thou in thy life, Robert William Elliston! and *not lessened* in thy death, if report speak truly, which says that thou didst direct that thy mortal remains should repose under no inscription but one of pure *Latinity*. Classical was thy bringing up! and beautiful was thy feeling on thy last bed, which, connecting the man with the boy, took thee back in thy latest exercise of imagination, to the days when, undreaming of Theatres and Managerships, thou wert a scholar, and an early ripe one, under the roofs builded by the munificent and pious Colet. For thee the Pauline Muses weep. In elegies, that shall silence this crude prose, they shall celebrate thy praise.

# Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago.

(*The Englishman's Magazine*, October, 1831.)

[The exact date referred to in this Essay was 1798, and not 1796, the paper first receiving the title which has ever since been affixed to it in 1833, when it was reprinted among The Last Essays of Elia, and not in 1831, when it originally appeared in the *Englishman's Magazine*. The journalism here discussed was of an epoch when the *Times* was ten years old and the *Post* seventeen; when the *Sun*, the *Chronicle*, and the *Herald*, since dead, were still flourishing; when the *Telegraph*, the *Standard*, the *Globe*, the *Daily News*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette* were all of them as yet undreamt of. "Sir J——s M——h" was Sir James Mackintosh, author of the Vindiciæ Gallicæ. The epigram alluded to in this essay has been given in the Prefatory Memoir.]

DAN STUART once told us, that he did not remember that he ever deliberately walked into the Exhibition at Somerset House in his life. He might occasionally have escorted a party of ladies across the way that were going in; but he never went in of his own head. Yet the office of the *Morning Post* newspaper stood then just where it does now—we are carrying you back, Reader, some thirty years or more—with its gilt-globe-topped front facing that emporium of our artists' grand Annual Exposure. We sometimes wish that we had observed the same abstinence with Daniel.

A word or two of D. S. He ever appeared to us one of the finest-tempered of Editors. Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle*, was equally pleasant, with a dash, no slight one either, of the courtier. S. was frank, plain, and English all over. We have worked for both these gentlemen.

It is soothing to contemplate the head of the Ganges; to trace the first little bubblings of a mighty river;

> With holy reverence to approach the rocks,
> Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.

Fired with a perusal of the Abyssinian Pilgrim's exploratory ramblings after

the cradle of the infant Nilus, we well remember on one fine summer holiday (a "whole day's leave" we called it at Christ's Hospital) sallying forth at rise of sun, not very well provisioned either for such an undertaking, to trace the current of the New River—Middletonian stream!—to its scaturient source, as we had read, in meadows by fair Amwell. Gallantly did we commence our solitary quest—for it was essential to the dignity of a DISCOVERY, that no eye of schoolboy save our own, should beam on the detection. By flowery spots, and verdant lanes, skirting Hornsey, Hope trained us on in many a baffling turn; endless, hopeless meanders, as it seemed; or as if the jealous waters had *dodged* us, reluctant to have the humble spot of their nativity revealed; till spent, and nigh famished, before set of the same sun, we sat down somewhere by Bowes Farm, near Tottenham, with a tithe of our proposed labours only yet accomplished; sorely convinced in spirit, that that Brucian enterprise was as yet too arduous for our young shoulders.

Not more refreshing to the thirsty curiosity of the traveller is the tracing of some mighty waters up to their shallow fontlet, than it is to a pleased and candid reader to go back to the inexperienced essays, the first callow flights in authorship, of some established name in literature; from the Gnat which preluded to the Æneid, to the Duck which Samuel Johnson trod on.

In those days every Morning Paper, as an essential retainer to its establishment, kept an author, who was bound to furnish daily a quantum of witty paragraphs. Sixpence a joke—and it was thought pretty high too—was Dan Stuart's settled remuneration in these cases. The chat of the day, scandal, but above all, *dress*, furnished the material. The length of no paragraph was to exceed seven lines. Shorter they might be, but they must be poignant.

A fashion of *flesh*, or rather *pink*-coloured hose for the ladies, luckily coming up at the juncture, when we were in our probation for the place of Chief Jester to S.'s Paper, established our reputation in that line. We were pronounced a "capital hand." O the conceits which we varied upon *red* in all its prismatic differences! from the trite and obvious flower of Cytherea, to the flaming costume of the lady that has her sitting upon "many waters." Then there was the collateral topic of ancles. What an occasion to a truly chaste writer, like ourself, of touching that nice brink, and never yet tumbling over it, of a seemingly ever approximating something "not quite proper;" while, like a skilful posture-master, balancing betwixt decorums and their opposites, he keeps the line, from which a hair's-breadth deviation is destruction; hovering in the confines of light and darkness, or where "both seem either;" a hazy uncertain delicacy; Autolycus-like in the Play, still putting off his expectant auditory with "Whoop, do me no harm, good man!" But, above all, that conceit arrided us most at that time, and still tickles our midriff to remember, where, allusively to the flight of Astræa—*ultima Cœlestûm terras reliquit*—we pronounced—in reference to the stockings still—that MODESTY TAKING HER FINAL LEAVE OF MORTALS, HER LAST BLUSH WAS VISIBLE IN HER ASCENT TO THE HEAVENS BY THE TRACT OF THE GLOWING INSTEP. This might be called the crowning conceit; and was esteemed tolerable writing in those days.

But the fashion of jokes, with all other things, passes away; as did the transient mode which had so favoured us. The ancles of our fair friends in a few weeks began to reassume their whiteness, and left us scarce a leg to stand upon. Other female whims followed, but none, methought, so pregnant, so invitatory of shrewd conceits, and more than single meanings.

Somebody has said, that to swallow six cross-buns daily consecutively for a fortnight would surfeit the stoutest digestion. But to have to furnish as many jokes daily, and that not for a fortnight, but for a long twelvemonth, as we were constrained to do, was a little harder execution. "Man goeth forth to his work until the evening"—from a reasonable hour in the morning, we presume it was meant. Now as our main occupation took us up from eight till

five every day in the City; and as our evening hours, at that time of life, had generally to do with anything rather than business, it follows, that the only time we could spare for this manufactory of jokes—our supplementary livelihood, that supplied us in every want beyond mere bread and cheese—was exactly that part of the day which (as we have heard of No Man's Land) may be fitly denominated No Man's Time; that is, no time in which a man ought to be up and awake in. To speak more plainly, it is that time, of an hour, or an hour and a half's duration, in which a man, whose occasions call him up so preposterously, has to wait for his breakfast.

O those headaches at dawn of day, when at five, or half-past five in summer, and not much later in the dark seasons, we were compelled to rise, having been perhaps not above four hours in bed—(for we were no go-to-beds with the lamb, though we anticipated the lark ofttimes in her rising—we liked a parting cup at midnight, as all young men did before these effeminate times, and to have our friends about us—we were not constellated under Aquarius, that watery sign, and therefore incapable of Bacchus, cold, washy, bloodless—we were none of your Basilian water-sponges, nor had taken our degrees at Mount Ague—we were right toping Capulets, jolly companions, we and they)—but to have to get up, as we have said before, curtailed of half our fair sleep, fasting, with only a dim vista of refreshing Bohea in the distance—to be necessitated to rouse ourselves at the detestable rap of an old hag of a domestic, who seemed to take a diabolical pleasure in her announcement that it was "time to rise;" and whose chappy knuckles we have often yearned to amputate, and string them up at our chamber door, to be a terror to all such unseasonable rest-breakers in future——

"Facil" and sweet, as Virgil sings, had been the "descending" of the over-night, balmy the first sinking of the heavy head upon the pillow; but to get up, as he goes on to say,

—revocare gradus, superasque evadere ad auras—

and to get up moreover to make jokes with malice prepended—there was the "labour,"—there the "work."

No Egyptian taskmaster ever devised a slavery like to that, our slavery. No fractious operants ever turned out for half the tyranny, which this necessity exercised upon us. Half a dozen jests in a day (bating Sundays too), why it seems nothing! We make twice the number every day in our lives as a matter of course, and claim no Sabbatical exemptions. But then they come into our head. But when the head has to go out to them—when the mountain must go to Mahomet—

Reader, try it for once, only for one short twelvemonth.

It was not every week that a fashion of pink stockings came up; but mostly, instead of it, some rugged, untractable subject; some topic impossible to be contorted into the risible; some feature, upon which no smile could play; some flint, from which no process of ingenuity could procure a distillation. There they lay; there your appointed tale of brick-making was set before you, which you must finish, with or without straw, as it happened. The craving dragon—*the Public*—like him in Bel's temple—must be fed; it expected its daily rations; and Daniel, and ourselves, to do us justice, did the best we could on this side bursting him.

While we were wringing out coy sprightliness for the Post, and writhing under the toil of what is called "easy writing," Bob Allen, our *quondam* schoolfellow, was tapping his impracticable brains in a like service for the *Oracle*. Not that Robert troubled himself much about wit. If his paragraphs had a sprightly air about them, it was sufficient. He carried this nonchalance so far at last, that a matter of intelligence, and that no very important one, was not seldom

palmed upon his employers for a good jest; for example sake—"*Walking yesterday morning casually down Snow Hill, who should we meet but Mr. Deputy Humphreys! we rejoice to add, that the worthy Deputy appeared to enjoy a good state of health. We do not remember ever to have seen him look better.*" This gentleman, so surprisingly met upon Snow Hill, from some pecularities in gait or gesture, was a constant butt for mirth to the small paragraph-mongers of the day; and our friend thought that he might have his fling at him with the rest. We met A. in Holborn shortly after this extraordinary rencounter, which he told with tears of satisfaction in his eyes, and chuckling at the anticipated effects of its announcement next day in the paper. We did not quite comprehend where the wit of it lay at the time; nor was it easy to be detected, when the thing came out, advantaged by type and letter-press. He had better have met anything that morning than a Common Councilman. His services were shortly after dispensed with, on the plea that his paragraphs of late had been deficient in point. The one in question, it must be owned, had an air, in the opening especially, proper to awaken curiosity; and the sentiment, or moral, wears the aspect of humanity, and good neighbourly feeling. But somehow the conclusion was not judged altogether to answer to the magnificent promise of the premises. We traced our friend's pen afterwards in the *True Briton*, the *Star*, the *Traveller*,—from all of which he was successively dismissed, the Proprietors having "no further occasion for his services." Nothing was easier than to detect him. When wit failed, or topics ran low, there constantly appeared the following—"*It is not generally known that the three Blue Balls at the Pawnbrokers' shops are the ancient arms of Lombardy. The Lombards were the first money-brokers in Europe.*" Bob has done more to set the public right on this important point of blazonry, than the whole College of Heralds.

The appointment of a regular wit has long ceased to be a part of the economy of a Morning Paper. Editors find their own jokes, or do as well without them. Parson Este, and Topham, brought up the set custom of "witty paragraphs" first in the *World*. Boaden was a reigning paragraphist in his day, and succeeded poor Allen in the *Oracle*. But, as we said, the fashion of jokes passes away; and it would be difficult to discover in the Biographer of Mrs. Siddons, any traces of that vivacity and fancy which charmed the whole town at the commencement of the present century. Even the prelusive delicacies of the present writer—the curt "Astræan allusion"—would be thought pedantic, and out of date, in these days.

From the office of the *Morning Post* (for we may as well exhaust our Newspaper Reminiscences at once) by change of property in the paper, we were transferred, mortifying exchange! to the office of the *Albion* Newspaper, late Rackstrow's Museum, in Fleet Street. What a transition—from a handsome apartment, from rose-wood desks, and silver inkstands, to an office—no office, but a *den* rather, but just redeemed from the occupation of dead monsters, of which it seemed redolent—from the centre of loyalty and fashion, to a focus of vulgarity and sedition! Here in murky closet, inadequate from its square contents to the receipt of the two bodies of Editor, and humble paragraph-maker, together at one time, sat in the discharge of his new Editorial functions (the "Bigod" of Elia) the redoubted John Fenwick.

F., without a guinea in his pocket, and having left not many in the pockets of his friends whom he might command, had purchased (on tick doubtless) the whole and sole Editorship, Proprietorship, with all the rights and titles (such as they were worth) of the *Albion*, from one Lovell; of whom we know nothing, save that he had stood in the pillory for a libel on the Prince of Wales. With this hopeless concern—for it had been sinking ever since its commencement, and could now reckon upon not more than a hundred subscribers—F. resolutely determined upon pulling down the Government in the first instance, and making

both our fortunes by way of corollary. For seven weeks and more did this infatuated Democrat go about borrowing seven shilling pieces, and lesser coin, to meet the daily demands of the Stamp Office, which allowed no credit to publications of that size in politics. An outcast from politer bread, we attached our small talents to the forlorn fortunes of our friend. Our occupation now was to write treason.

Recollections of feelings—which were all that now remained from our first boyish heats kindled by the French Revolution, when if we were misled, we erred in the company of some, who are accounted very good men now—rather than any tendency at this time to Republican doctrines—assisted us in assuming a style of writing, while the paper lasted, consonant in no very undertone to the right earnest fanaticism of F. Our cue was now to insinuate, rather than recommend, possible abdications. Blocks, axes, Whitehall tribunals, were covered with flowers of so cunning a periphrasis—as Mr. Bayes says, never naming the *thing* directly—that the keen eye of an Attorney-General was insufficient to detect the lurking snake among them. There were times, indeed, when we sighed for our more gentleman-like occupation under Stuart. But with change of masters it is ever change of service. Already one paragraph, and another, as we learned afterwards from a gentleman at the Treasury, had begun to be marked at that office, with a view of its being submitted at least to the attention of the proper Law Officers—when an unlucky, or rather lucky, epigram from our pen, aimed at Sir J——s M——h, who was on the eve of departing for India to reap the fruits of his apostasy, as F. pronounced it (it is hardly worth particularizing), happening to offend the nice sense of Lord, or, as he then delighted to be called, Citizen Stanhope, deprived F. at once of the last hopes of a guinea from the last patron that had stuck by us; and breaking up our establishment, left us to the safe, but somewhat mortifying, neglect of the Crown Lawyers.—It was about this time, or a little earlier, that Dan Stuart made that curious confession to us, that he had "never deliberately walked into an Exhibition at Somerset House in his life."

# Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Production of Modern Art.

(*The Athenæum*, January and February, 1833.)

HOGARTH excepted, can we produce any one painter within the last fifty years, or since the humour of exhibiting began, that has treated a story *imaginatively?* By this we mean, upon whom his subject has so acted, that it has seemed to direct *him*—not to be arranged by him? Any upon whom its leading or collateral points have impressed themselves so tyranically that he dare not treat it otherwise, least he should falsify a revelation? Any that has imparted to his compositions, not merely so much truth as is enough to convey a story with clearness, but that individualizing property, which should keep the subject so treated distinct in feature from every other subject, however similar, and to common apprehensions almost identical; so as that we might say, this and

this part could have found an appropriate place in no other picture in the world but this? Is there anything in modern art—we will not demand that it should be equal—but in any way analogous to what Titian has effected, in that wonderful bringing together of two times in the "Ariadne," in the National Gallery? Precipitous, with his reeling Satyr rout about him, re-peopling and re-illuming suddenly the waste places, drunk with a new fury beyond the grape, Bacchus, born in fire, fire-like flings himself at the Cretan. This is the time present. With his telling of the story an artist, and no ordinary one, might remain richly proud. Guido, in his harmonious version of it, saw no farther. But from the depths of the imaginative spirit Titian has recalled past time, and laid it contributory with the present to one simultaneous effect. With the desert all ringing with the mad cymbals of his followers, made lucid with the presence and new offers of a god,—as if unconscious of Bacchus, or but idly casting her eyes as upon some unconcerning pageant—her soul undistracted from Theseus—Ariadne is still pacing the solitary shore, in as much heart-silence, and in almost the same local solitude, with which she awoke at day-break to catch the forlorn glances of the sail that bore away the Athenian.

Here are two points miraculously co-uniting; fierce society, with the feeling of solitude still absolute; noonday revelations, with the accidents of the dull grey dawn unquenched and lingering; the *present* Bacchus, with the *past* Ariadne; two stories, with double Time: separate, and harmonizing. Had the artist made the woman one shade less indifferent to the God: still more, had she expressed a rapture at his advent, where would have been the story of the mighty desolation of the heart previous? merged in the insipid accident of a flattering offer met with a welcome acceptance. The broken heart for Theseus was not lightly to be pieced up by a God.

We have before us a fine rough print, from a picture by Raphael in the Vatican. It is the Presentation of the new-born Eve to Adam by the Almighty. A fairer mother of mankind we might imagine, and a goodlier sire perhaps of men since born. But these are matters subordinate to the conception of the *situation*, displayed in this extraordinary production. A tolerably modern artist would have been satisfied with tempering certain raptures of connubial anticipation, with a suitable acknowledgment to the Giver of the blessing, in the countenance of the first bridegroom; something like the divided attention of the child (Adam was here a child man) between the given toy, and the mother who had just blessed it with the bauble. This is the obvious, the first-sight view, the superficial. An artist of a higher grade, considering the awful presence they were in, would have taken care to subtract something from the expression of the more human passion, and to heighten the more spiritual one. This would be as much as an exhibition-goer, from the opening of Somerset House to last year's show, has been encouraged to look for. It is obvious to hint at a lower expression, yet in a picture, that for respects of drawing and colouring, might be deemed not wholly inadmissible within these art-fostering walls, in which the raptures should be as ninety-nine, the gratitude as one, or perhaps zero! By neither the one passion nor the other has Raphael expounded the situation of Adam. Singly upon his brow sits the absorbing sense of wonder at the created miracle. The *moment* is seized by the intuitive artist, perhaps not self-conscious of his art, in which neither of the conflicting emotions—a moment how abstracted—have had time to spring up, or to battle for indecorous mastery.—We have seen a landscape of a justly admired neoteric, in which he aimed at delineating a fiction, one of the most severely beautiful in antiquity—the gardens of the Hesperides. To do Mr. —— justice, he had painted a laudable orchard, with fitting seclusion, and a veritable dragon (of which a Polypheme by Poussin is somehow a fac-simile for the situation), looking over into the world shut out backwards, so that none but a "still-climbing Hercules" could hope to get a peep at the admired Ternary of

Recluses. No conventual porter could keep his keys better than this custos with the "lidless eyes." He not only sees that none *do* intrude into that privacy, but, as clear as daylight, that none but *Hercules aut Diabolus* by any manner of means *can*. So far all is well. We have absolute solitude here or nowhere. *Ab extra* the damsels are snug enough. But here the artist's courage seems to have failed him. He began to pity his pretty charge, and, to comfort the irksomeness, has peopled their solitude with a bevy of fair attendants, maids of honour, or ladies of the bed-chamber, according to the approved etiquette at a court of the nineteenth century; giving to the whole scene the air of a *fête champêtre*, if we will but excuse the absence of the gentlemen. This is well, and Watteauish. But what is become of the solitary mystery—the

> Daughters three,
> That sing around the golden tree?

This is not the way in which Poussin would have treated this subject.

The paintings, or rather the stupendous architectural designs, of a modern artist, have been urged as objections to the theory of our motto. They are of a character, we confess, to stagger it. His towered structures are of the highest order of the material sublime. Whether they were dreams, or transcripts of some elder workmanship—Assyrian ruins old—restored by this mighty artist, they satisfy our most stretched and craving conceptions of the glories of the antique world. It is a pity that they were ever peopled. On that side, the imagination of the artist halts, and appears defective. Let us examine the point of the story in the "Belshazzar's Feast." We will introduce it by an apposite anecdote.

The court historians of the day record, that at the first dinner given by the late King (then Prince Regent) at the Pavilion, the following characteristic frolic was played off. The guests were select and admiring; the banquet profuse and admirable; the lights lustrous and oriental; the eye was perfectly dazzled with the display of plate, among which the great gold salt-cellar, brought from the regalia in the Tower for this especial purpose, itself a tower! stood conspicuous for its magnitude. And now the Rev. ——, the then admired Court Chaplain, was proceeding with the grace, when, at a signal given, the lights were suddenly overcast, and a huge transparency was discovered, in which glittered in golden letters—

"BRIGHTON—EARTHQUAKE—SWALLOW-UP-ALIVE."

Imagine the confusion of the guests; the Georges and garters, jewels, bracelets, moulted upon the occasion! The fans dropped, and picked up the next morning by the sly court pages! Mrs. Fitz-what's-her-name fainting, and the Countess of —— holding the smelling-bottle, till the good-humoured Prince caused harmony to be restored by calling in fresh candles, and declaring that the whole was nothing but a pantomime *hoax*, got up by the ingenious Mr. Farley, of Covent Garden, from hints which his Royal Highness himself had furnished! Then imagine the infinite applause that followed, the mutual rallyings, the declarations that "they were not much frightened," of the assembled galaxy.

The point of time in the picture exactly answers to the appearance of the transparency in the anecdote. The huddle, the flutter, the bustle, the escape, the alarm, and the mock alarm; the prettinesses heightened by consternation; the courtier's fear which was flattery, and the lady's which was affectation; all that we may conceive to have taken place in a mob of Brighton courtiers, sympathizing with the well-acted surprise of their sovereign; all this, and no more, is exhibited by the well-dressed lords and ladies in the Hall of Belus.

Just this sort of consternation we have seen among a flock of disquieted wild geese at the report only of a gun having gone off!

But is this vulgar fright, this mere animal anxiety for the preservation of their persons,—such as we have witnessed at a theatre, when a slight alarm of fire has been given—an adequate exponent of a supernatural terror? the way in which the finger of God, writing judgments, would have been met by the withered conscience? There is a human fear, and a divine fear. The one is disturbed, restless, and bent upon escape. The other is bowed down, effortless, passive. When the spirit appeared before Eliphaz in the visions of the night, and the hair of his flesh stood up, was it in the thoughts of the Temanite to ring the bell of his chamber, or to call up the servants? But let us see in the text what there is to justify all this huddle of vulgar consternation.

From the words of Daniel it appears that Belshazzar had made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. The golden and silver vessels are gorgeously enumerated, with the princes, the king's concubines, and his wives. Then follows—

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the *king* saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the *king's* countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosened, and his knees smote one against another."

This is the plain text. By no hint can it be otherwise inferred, but that the appearance was solely confined to the fancy of Belshazzar, that his single brain was troubled. Not a word is spoken of its being seen by any else there present, not even by the queen herself, who merely undertakes for the interpretation of the phenomenon, as related to her, doubtless by her husband. The lords are simply said to be astonished; *i.e.*, at the trouble and the change of countenance in their sovereign. Even the prophet does not appear to have seen the scroll, which the king saw. He recalls it only, as Joseph did the Dream to the King of Egypt. "Then was the part of the hand sent from him [the Lord], and this writing was written." He speaks of the phantasm as past.

Then what becomes of this needless multiplication of the miracle? this message to a royal conscience, singly expressed—for it was said, "thy kingdom is divided," simultaneously impressed upon the fancies of a thousand courtiers, who were implied in it neither correctly nor grammatically?

But admitting the artist's own version of the story, and that the sight was seen also by the thousand courtiers—let it have been visible to all Babylon—as the knees of Belshazzar were shaken, and his countenance troubled, even so would the knees of every man in Babylon, and their countenances, as of an individual man, been troubled; bowed, bent down, so would they have remained, stupor-fixed, with no thought of struggling with that inevitable judgment.

Not all that is optically possible to be seen, is to be shown in every picture. The eye delightedly dwells upon the brilliant individualities in a "Marriage at Cana," by Veronese, or Titian, to the very texture and colour of the wedding garments, the rings glittering upon the bride's fingers, the metal and fashion of the wine-pots; for at such seasons, there is leisure and luxury to be curious. But in a "day of judgment," or in a "day of lesser horrors, yet divine," as at the impious feast of Belshazzar, the eye should see, as the actual eye of an agent or patient in the immediate scene would see, only in masses and indistinction. Not only the female attire and jewellery exposed to the critical eye of the fashion, as minutely as the dresses in a lady's magazine, in the criticized picture,—but perhaps the curiosities of anatomical science, and studied diversities of posture in the fallen angels and sinners of Michael Angelo,—have no business in their great subjects. There was no leisure of them.

By a wise falsification, the great masters of painting got at their true conclusions; by not showing the actual appearances, that was, all that was to be seen at

any given moment by an indifferent eye, but only what the eye might be supposed to see in the doing or suffering of some portentous action. Suppose the moment of the swallowing up of Pompeii. There they were to be seen—houses, columns, architectural proportions, differences of public and private buildings, men and women, at their standing occupations, the diversified thousand postures, attitudes, dresses, in some confusion truly, but physically they were visible. But what eye saw them at that eclipsing moment, which reduces confusion to a kind of unity, and when the senses are upturned from their proprieties, when sight and hearing are a feeling only? A thousand years have passed, and we are at leisure to contemplate the weaver fixed standing at his shuttle, the baker at his oven, and to turn over with antiquarian coolness the pots and pans of Pompeii.

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeah, and thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." Who, in reading this magnificent Hebraism, in his conception, sees aught but the heroic son of Nun, with the outstretched arm, and the greater and lesser light obsequies? Doubtless there were to be seen hill and dale, and chariots and horsemen, on open plain or winding by secret defiles, and all the circumstances and stratagems of war. But whose eyes would have been conscious of this array at the interposition of the sychronic miracle? Yet in the picture of this subject by the artist of the "Belshazzar's Feast"—no ignoble work either—the marshalling and landscape of the war is everything, the miracle sinks into an anecdote of the day; and the eye may "dart through rank and file traverse" for some minutes, before it shall discover, among his armed followers, *which is Joshua!* Not modern art alone, but ancient, where only it is to be found if anywhere, can be detected erring, from defect of this imaginative faculty. The world has nothing to show of the preternatural in painting, transcending the figure of Lazarus bursting his grave-clothes, in the great picture at Angerstein's. It seems a thing between two beings. A ghastly horror at itself struggles with newly-apprehended gratitude at second life bestowed. It cannot forget that it was a ghost. It has hardly felt that it is a body. It has to tell of the world of spirits.—Was it from a feeling, that the crowd of half-impassioned bystanders, and the still more irrelevant herd of passers-by at a distance, who have not heard or but faintly have been told of the passing miracle, admirable as they are in design and hue—for it is a glorified work—do not respond adequately to the action—that the single figure of Lazarus has been attributed to Michael Angelo, and the mighty Sebastian unfairly robbed of the fame of the greater half of the interest? Now that there were not indifferent passers-by within actual scope of the eyes of those present at the miracles to whom the sound of it had but faintly, or not at all, reached, it would be hardihood to deny; but would they see them? or can the mind in the conception of it admit of such unconcerning objects? can it think of them at all? or what associating league to the imagination can there be between the seers, and the seers not, of a presential miracle?

Were an artist to paint upon demand a picture of a Dryad, we will ask whether, in the present low state of expectation, the patron would not, or ought not to be fully satisfied with a beautiful naked figure recumbent under wide-stretched oaks? Disseat those woods, and place the same figure among fountains, and falls of pellucid water, and you have a—Naiad! Not so in a rough print we have seen after Julio Romano, we think—for it is long since—*there*, by no process, with mere change of scene, could the figure have reciprocated characters. Long, grotesque, fantastic, yet with a grace of her own, beautiful in convolution and distortion, linked to her connatural tree, co-twisted with its limbs her own, till both seemed either—these, animated branches; those, disanimated members—yet the animal and vegetable lives sufficiently kept distinct—*his* Dryad lay—an approximation of two natures, which to conceive, it must be seen: analogous to, not the same with the delicacies of Ovidian transformations.

To the lowest subjects, and to a superficial comprehension, the most barren, the Great Masters gave loftiness and fruitfulness. The large eye of genius saw in the meanness of present objects, their capabilities of treatment from their relations to some grand Past or Future. How has Raphael—we must still linger about the Vatican—treated the humble craft of the ship-builder, in *his* "Building of the Ark?" It is in that scriptural series, to which we have referred, and which, judging from some fine rough old graphic sketches of them which we possess, seem to be of a higher and more poetic grade than even the Cartoons. The dim of sight are the timid and the shrinking. There is a cowardice in modern art. As the Frenchmen, of whom Coleridge's friend made the prophetic guess at Rome, from the beard and horns of the Moses of Michael Angelo collected no inferences beyond that of a He Goat and a Cornuto; so from this subject, of mere mechanic promise, it would instinctively turn away, as from one incapable of investiture with any grandeur. The dockyards at Woolwich would object derogatory associations. The depôt at Chatham would be the mote and the beam in its intellectual eye. But not to the nautical preparations in the shipyards of Civita Vecchia did Raphael look for instructions, when he imagined the Building of the Vessel that was to be conservatory of the wrecks of the species of drowned mankind. In the intensity of the action, he keeps ever out of sight the meanness of the operation. There is the Patriarch, in calm forethought, and with holy prescience, giving directions. And there are his agents—the solitary but sufficient Three—hewing, sawing, every one with the might and earnestness of a Demiurgus; under some instinctive rather than technical guidance; giant-muscled; every one a Hercules, or liker to those Vulcanian Three, that in sounding caverns under Mongibello wrought in fire—Brontes, and black Steropes, and Pyracmon. So work the workmen that should repair a world!

Artists again err in the confounding of *poetic with pictorial subjects*. In the latter, the exterior accidents are nearly everything, the unseen qualities as nothing. Othello's colour—the infirmities and corpulence of a Sir John Falstaff—do they haunt us perpetually in the reading? or are they obtruded upon our conceptions one time for ninety-nine that we are lost in admiration at the respective moral or intellectual attributes of the character? But in a picture Othello is *always* a Blackamoor; and the other only Plump Jack. Deeply corporealized, and enchained hopelessly in the grovelling fetters of externality, must be the mind, to which, in its better moments, the image of the high-souled, high-intelligenced Quixote—the errant Star of Knighthood, made more tender by eclipse—has never presented itself, divested from the unhallowed accompaniment of a Sancho, or a rabblement at the heels of Rosinante. That man has read his book by halves; he has laughed, mistaking his author's purport, which was—tears. The artist that pictures Quixote (and it is in this degrading point that he is every season held up at our Exhibitions) in the shallow hope of exciting mirth, would have joined the rabble at the heels of his starved steed. We wish not to see *that* counterfeited, which we would not have wished to see in the reality. Conscious of the heroic inside of the noble Quixote, who, on hearing that his withered person was passing, would have stepped over his threshold to gaze upon his forlorn habilaments, and the "strange bedfellows which misery brings a man acquainted with?" Shade of Cervantes! who in thy Second Part could put into the mouth of thy Quixote those high aspirations of a super-chivalrous gallantry, where he replies to one of the shepherdesses, apprehensive that he would spoil their pretty net-works, and inviting him to be a guest with them, in accents like these: "Truly, fairest lady, Actæon was not more astonished when he saw Diana bathing herself at the fountain, than I have been in beholding your beauty: I commend the manner of your pastime, and thank you for your kind offers; and, if I may serve you, so I may be sure you will be obeyed, you may command me: for my profession is this,

To show myself thankful, and a doer of good to all sorts of people, especially of the rank that your person shows you to be; and if those nets, as they take up but a little piece of ground, should take up the whole world, I would seek out new worlds to pass through, rather than break them: and" (he adds), "that you may give credit to this my exaggeration, behold at least he that promiseth you this, is Don Quixote de la Mancha, if haply this name hath come to your hearing." Illustrious Romancer! were the "fine frenzies," which possessed the brain of thy own Quixote, a fit subject, as in this Second Part, to be exposed to the jeers of Duennas and Serving men; to be monstered, and shown up at the heartless banquets of great men? Was that pitiable infirmity, which in thy First Part misleads him, *always from within*, into half-ludicrous, but more than half-compassionable and admirable errors, not infliction enough from heaven, that men by studied artifices must devise and practise upon the humour, to inflame where they should sooth it? Why, Goneril would have blushed to practise upon the abdicated king at this rate, and the she-wolf Regan not have endured to play the pranks upon his fled wits, which thou hast made thy Quixote suffer in Duchesses' halls, and at the hands of that unworthy nobleman.*

In the First Adventures, even, it needed all the art of the most consummate artist in the Book way that the world hath yet seen, to keep up in the mind of the reader the heroic attributes of the character without relaxing; so as absolutely that they shall suffer no alloy from the debasing fellowship of the clown. If it ever obtrudes itself as a disharmony, are we inclined to laugh; or not, rather, to indulge a contrary emotion?—Cervantes, stung, perchance, by the relish with which *his* Reading Public had received the fooleries of the man, more to their palates than the generosities of the master, in the sequel let his pen run riot, lost the harmony and the balance, and sacrificed a great idea to the taste of his contemporaries. We know that in the present day the Knight has fewer admirers than the Squire. Anticipating, what did actually happen to him—as afterwards it did to his scarce inferior follower, the author of "Guzman de Alfarache"—that some less knowing hand would prevent him by a spurious Second Part; and judging that it would be easier for his competitor, to outbid him in the comicalities, than in the *romance* of his work, he abandoned his Knight, and has fairly set up the Squire for his Hero. For what else has he unsealed the eyes of Sancho: and instead of that twilight state of semi-insanity—the madness at second-hand—the contagion, caught from a stronger mind infected—that war between native cunning, and hereditary deference, with which he has hitherto accompanied his master—two for a pair almost—does he substitute a downright Knave, with open eyes, for his own ends only following a confessed Madman; and offering at one time to lay, if not actually laying, hands upon him. From the moment that Sancho loses his reverence, Don Quixote is become a—treatable lunatic. Our artists handle him accordingly.

## The Wedding.

["Admiral ——" is thought by some to have meant Admiral Burney.]

I do not know when I have been better pleased than at being invited last week to be present at the wedding of a friend's daughter. I like to make one at

* Yet from this Second Part, our cried-up pictures are mostly selected; the waiting-women with beards, &c.

these ceremonies, which to us old people give back our youth in a manner, and restore our gayest season, in the remembrance of our own success, or the regrets, scarcely less tender, of our own youthful disappointments, in this point of a settlement. On these occasions I am sure to be in good-humour for a week or two after, and enjoy a reflected honeymoon. Being without a family, I am flattered with these temporary adoptions in a friend's family; I feel a sort of cousinhood, or uncleship, for the season; I am inducted into degrees of affinity; and, in the participated socialities of the little community, I lay down for a brief while my solitary bachelorship. I carry this humour so far, that I take it unkindly to be left out, even when a funeral is going on in the house of a dear friend. But to my subject.——

The union itself had been long settled, but its celebration had been hitherto deferred, to an almost unreasonable state of suspense in the lovers, by some invincible prejudices which the bride's father had unhappily contracted upon the subject of the too early marriages of females. He has been lecturing any time these five years—for to that length the courtship has been protracted—upon the propriety of putting off the solemnity, till the lady should have completed her five-and-twentieth year. We all began to be afraid that a suit, which as yet had abated of none of its ardours, might at last be lingered on, till passion had time to cool, and love go out in the experiment. But a little wheedling on the part of his wife, who was by no means a party to these over-strained notions, joined to some serious expostulations on that of his friends, who, from the growing infirmities of the old gentleman, could not promise ourselves many years' enjoyment of his company, and were anxious to bring matters to a conclusion during his lifetime, at length prevailed; and on Monday last the daughter of my old friend Admiral —— having attained the *womanly* age of nineteen, was conducted to the church by her pleasant cousin J——, who told some few years older.

Before the youthful part of my female readers express their indignation at the abominable loss of time occasioned to the lovers by the preposterous notions of my old friend, they will do well to consider the reluctance which a fond parent naturally feels at parting with his child. To this unwillingness, I believe, in most cases may be traced the difference of opinion on this point between child and parent, whatever pretences of interest or prudence may be held out to cover it. The hardheartedness of fathers is a fine theme for romance writers, a sure and moving topic; but is there not something untender, to say no more of it, in the hurry which a beloved child is sometimes in to tear herself from the parental stock, and commit herself to strange graftings? The case is heightened where the lady, as in the present instance, happens to be an only child. I do not understand these matters experimentally, but I can make a shrewd guess at the wounded pride of a parent upon these occasions. It is no new observation, I believe, that a lover in most cases has no rival so much to be feared as the father. Certainly there is a jealousy in *unparallel subjects*, which is little less heart-rending than the passion which we more strictly christen by that name. Mother's scruples are more easily got over! for this reason, I suppose, that the protection transferred to a husband is less a derogation and a loss to their authority than to the paternal. Mothers, besides, have a trembling foresight, which paints the inconveniences (impossible to be conceived in the same degree by the other parent) of a life of forlorn celibacy, which the refusal of a tolerable match may entail upon their child. Mothers' instinct is a surer guide here, than the cold reasonings of a father on such a topic. To this instinct may be imputed, and by it alone may be excused, the unbeseeming artifices, by which some wives push on the matrimonial projects of their daughters, which the husband, however approving, shall entertain with comparative indifference. A little shamelessness on this head is pardonable. With this explanation, forwardness

becomes a grace, and maternal importunity receives the name of a virtue.—But the parson stays, while I preposterously assume his office; I am preaching, while the bride is on the threshold.

Nor let any of my female readers suppose that the sage reflections which have just escaped me have the obliquest tendency of application to the young lady, who it will be seen, is about to venture upon a change in her condition, at a *mature and competent age*, and not without the fullest approbation of all parties. I only deprecate *very hasty marriages*.

It had been fixed that the ceremony should be gone through at an early hour, to give time for a little *déjeûner* afterwards, to which a select party of friends had been invited. We were in church a little before the clock struck eight.

Nothing could be more judicious or graceful than the dress of the bridesmaids—the three charming Miss Foresters—on this morning. To give the bride an opportunity of shining singly, they had come habited all in green. I am ill at describing female apparel; but, while *she* stood at the altar in vestments white and candid as her thoughts, a sacrificial whiteness, *they* assisted in robes, such as might become Diana's nymphs—Foresters indeed—as such who had not yet come to the resolution of putting off cold virginity. These young maids, not being so blessed as to have a mother living, I am told, keep single for their father's sake, and live all together so happy with their remaining parent, that the hearts of their lovers are ever broken with the prospect (so inauspicious to their hopes) of such uninterrupted and provoking home-comfort. Gallant girls! each a victim worthy of Iphigenia!

I do not know what business I have to be present in solemn places. I cannot divest me of an unseasonable disposition to levity upon the most awful occasions. I was never cut out for a public functionary. Ceremony and I have long shaken hands; but I could not resist the importunities of the young lady's father, whose gout unhappily confined him at home, to act as parent on this occasion, and *give away the bride*. Something ludicrous occurred to me at this most serious of all moments—a sense of my unfitness to have the disposal, even in imagination, of the sweet young creature beside me. I fear I was betrayed to some lightness, for the awful eye of the parson—and the rector's eye of Saint Mildred's in the Poultry is no trifle of a rebuke—was upon me in an instant, souring my incipient jest to the tristful severities of a funeral.

This was the only misbehaviour which I can plead to upon this solemn occasion, unless what was objected to me after the ceremony by one of the handsome Miss T[urner]s, be accounted a solecism. She was pleased to say that she had never seen a gentleman before me give away a bride in black. Now black has been my ordinary apparel so long—indeed I take it to be the proper costume of an author—the stage sanctions it—that to have appeared in some lighter colour would have raised more mirth at my expense, than the anomaly had created censure. But I could perceive that the bride's mother, and some elderly ladies present (God bless them!), would have been well content, if I had come in any other colour than that. But I got over the omen by a lucky apologue, which I remembered out of Pilpay, or some Indian author, of all the birds being invited to the linnets' wedding, at which, when all the rest came in their gayest feathers, the raven alone apologized for his cloak because "he had no other." This tolerably reconciled the elders. But with the young people all was merriment, and shakings of hands, and congratulations, and kissing away the bride's tears, and kissings from her in return, till a young lady, who assumed some experience in these matters, having worn the nuptial bands some four or five weeks longer than her friend, rescued her, archly observing, with half an eye upon the bridegroom, that at this rate she would have "none left."

My friend the Admiral was in fine wig and buckle on this occasion—a striking

contrast to his usual neglect of personal appearance. He did not once shove up his borrowed locks (his custom ever at his morning studies) to betray the few grey stragglers of his own beneath them. He wore an aspect of thoughtful satisfaction. I trembled for the hour, which at length approached, when after a protracted *breakfast* of three hours—if stores of cold fowls, tongues, hams, botargoes, dried fruits, wines, cordials, &c., can deserve so meagre an appellation—the coach was announced, which was to come to carry off the bride and bridegroom for a season, as custom has sensibly ordained, into the country; upon which design, wishing them a felicitous journey, let us return to the assembled guests.

> As when a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
> The eyes of men
> Are idly bent on him that enters next,

so idly did we bend our eyes upon one another, when the chief performers in the morning's pageant had vanished. None told his tale. None sipped her glass. The poor Admiral made an effort—it was not much. I had anticipated so far. Even the infinity of full satisfaction, that had betrayed itself through the prim looks and quiet deportment of his lady, began to wane into something like misgiving. No one knew whether to take their leaves or stay. We seemed assembled upon a silly occasion. In this crisis, betwixt tarrying and departure, I must do justice to a foolish talent of mine, which had otherwise like to have brought me into disgrace in the fore-part of the day; I mean a power, in any emergency, of thinking and giving vent to all manner of strange nonsense. In this awkward dilemma I found it sovereign. I rattled off some of my most excellent absurdities. All were willing to be relieved, at any expense of reason from the pressure of the intolerable vacuum which had succeeded to the morning bustle. By this means I was fortunate in keeping together the better part of the company to a late hour: and a rubber of whist (the Admiral's favourite game) with some rare strokes of chance as well as skill, which came opportunely on his side—lengthened out till midnight—dismissed the old gentleman at last to his bed with comparatively easy spirits.

I have been at my old friend's various times since. I do not know a visiting place where every guest is so perfectly at his ease; nowhere, where harmony is so strangely the result of confusion. Everybody is at cross purposes, yet the effect is so much better than uniformity. Contradictory orders; servants pulling one way; master and mistress driving some other, yet both diverse; visitors huddled up in corners; chairs unsymmetrized; candles disposed by chance; meals at odd hours, tea and supper at once, or the latter preceding the former; the host and the guest conferring, yet each upon a different topic, each understanding himself, neither trying to understand or hear the other; draughts and politics, chess and political economy, cards and conversation on nautical matters, going on at once, without the hope, or indeed the wish, of distinguishing them, make it altogether the most perfect *concordia discors* you shall meet with. Yet somehow the old house is not quite what it should be. The Admiral still enjoys his pipe, but he has no Miss Emily to fill it for him. The instrument stands where it stood, but she is gone whose delicate touch could sometimes for a short minute appease the warring elements. He has learnt, as Marvel expresses it, to "make his destiny his choice." He bears bravely up, but he does not come out with his flashes of wild wit so thick as formerly. His sea songs seldom escape him. His wife, too, looks as if she wanted some younger body to scold and set to rights. We all miss a junior presence. It is wonderful how one young maiden freshens up, and keeps green, the paternal roof. Old and young seem to have an interest in her, so long as she is not absolutely disposed of. The youthfulness of the house is flown. Emily is married.

# Popular Fallacies.

[Under this heading Charles Lamb contributed to the *New Monthly Magazine*, in 1826, a series of nineteen papers altogether. Two of these were included by him in 1833, among the Last Essays of Elia—"That Great Wit is Allied to Madness," being then more tersely entitled "Sanity of True Genius," while the other, which had periphrastically announced as its thesis "That my Lord Shaftesbury and Sir William Temple are models of The Genteel Style of Writing," retained in the reprint only the last five words, "The Genteel Style of Writing," as a sufficient designation. Another paper, the one published in the *New Monthly*, for June, 1826, "That a Deformed Person is a Lord," for some unexplained reason was not included by Lamb either among the Elian Essays proper, or among these supplemented minor papers called Popular Fallacies. The two former, under their revised titles, have been allowed to retain their place in the Second Series of Elia, in obedience to the evident desire of the Essayist. The hitherto overlooked paper on the other hand (discarded or forgotten by its writer, in 1833) is included, but at the same time carefully bracketed, among the Popular Fallacies, which are thus increased from Sixteen to Seventeen.]

## I.

### THAT A BULLY IS ALWAYS A COWARD.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

THIS axiom contains a principle of compensation, which disposes us to admit the truth of it. But there is no safe trusting to dictionaries and definitions. We should more willingly fall in with this popular language, if we did not find *brutality* sometimes awkwardly coupled with *valour* in the same vocabulary. The comic writers, with their poetical justice, have contributed not a little to mislead us on this point. To see a hectoring fellow exposed and beaten upon the stage, has something in it wonderfully diverting. Some people's share of animal spirits is notoriously low and defective. It has not strength to raise a vapour, or furnish out the wind of a tolerable bluster. These love to be told that huffing is no part of valour. The truest courage with them is that which is the least noisy and obtruvise. But confront one of the silent heroes with the swaggerer of real life, and his confidence in the theory quickly vanishes. Pretensions do not uniformly bespeak non-performance. A modest inoffensive deportment does not necessarily imply valour; neither does the absence of it justify us in denying that quality. Hickman wanted modesty—we do not mean *him* of Clarissa—but who ever doubted his courage? Even the poets—upon whom this equitable distribution of qualities should be most binding—have thought it agreeable to nature to depart from the rule upon occasion. Harapha, in the "Agonistes," is indeed a bully upon the received notions. Milton has made him at once a blusterer, a giant, and a dastard. But Almanzor, in Dryden, talks of driving armies singly before him—and does it. Tom Brown had a shrewder insight into this kind of character than either of his predecessors. He divides the palm more equably, and allows his hero a sort of dimidiate pre-eminence:—"Bully Dawson kicked by half the town, and half the town kicked by Bully Dawson." This was true distributive justice.

## II.

### THAT ILL-GOTTEN GAIN NEVER PROSPERS.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

THE weakest part of mankind have this saying commonest in their mouth. It is the trite consolation administered to the easy dupe, when he has been tricked out of his money or estate, that the acquisition of it will do the owner *no good.* But the rogues of this world—the prudenter part of them, at least—know better; and, if the observation had been as true as it is old, would not have failed by this time to have discovered it. They have pretty sharp distinctions of the fluctuating and the permanent. "Lightly come, lightly go," is a proverb, which they can very well afford to leave, when they leave little else, to the losers. They do not always find manors, got by rapine, or chicanery, insensibly to melt away, as the poets will have it; or that all gold glides, like thawing snow, from the thief's hand that grasps it. Church land, alienated to lay uses, was formerly denounced to have this slippery quality. But some portions of it somehow always stuck so fast, that the denunciators have been fain to postpone the prophecy of refundment to a late posterity.

## III.

### THAT A MAN MUST NOT LAUGH AT HIS OWN JEST.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

THE severest exaction surely ever invented upon the self-denial of poor human nature! This is to expect a gentleman to give a treat without partaking of it; to sit esurient at his own table, and commend the flavour of his venison upon the absurd strength of his never touching it himself. On the contrary, we love to see a wag *taste* his own joke to his party; to watch a quirk, or a merry conceit, flickering upon the lips some seconds before the tongue is delivered of it. If it be good, fresh, and racy—begotten of the occasion; if he that utters it never thought it before, he is naturally the first to be tickled with it; and any suppression of such complacence we hold to be churlish and insulting. What does it seem to imply, but that your company is weak or foolish enough to be moved by an image or a fancy, that shall stir you not at all, or but faintly. This is exactly the humour of the fine gentleman in Mandeville, who, while he dazzles his guests with the display of some costly toy, affects himself to "see nothing considerable in it."

## IV.

### THAT SUCH A ONE SHOWS HIS BREEDING.—THAT IT IS EASY TO PERCEIVE HE IS NO GENTLEMAN.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

A SPEECH from the poorer sort of people, which always indicates that the party vituperated is a gentleman. The very fact which they deny, is that which galls and exasperates them to use this language. The forbearance with which it is usually received, is a proof what interpretation the bystander sets upon it. Of a kin to this, and still less politic, are the phrases with which, in their street rhetoric, they ply one another more grossly:—*He is a poor creature.—He has not*

*a rag to cover*—— *&c.*, though this last, we confess, is more frequently applied by females to females. They do not perceive that the satire glances upon themselves. A poor man, of all things in the world, should not upbraid an antagonist with poverty. Are there no other topics—as, to tell him his father was hanged—his sister, &c.——, without exposing a secret, which should be kept snug between them; and doing an affront to the order to which they have the honour equally to belong? All this while they do not see how the wealthier man stands by and laughs in his sleeve at both.

## V.

### THAT THE POOR COPY THE VICES OF THE RICH.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

A SMOOTH text to the latter; and, preached from the pulpit, is sure of a docile audience from the pews lined with satin. It is twice sitting upon velvet to a foolish squire to be told, that *he*, and not *perverse nature*, as the homilies would make us imagine, is the true cause of all the irregularities in his parish. This is striking at the root of free-will indeed, and denying the originality of sin in any sense. But men are not such implicit sheep as this comes to. If the abstinence from evil on the part of the upper classes is to derive itself from no higher principle, than the apprehension of setting ill patterns to the lower, we beg leave to discharge them from all squeamishness on that score: they may even take their fill of pleasures, where they can find them. The Genius of Poverty, hampered and straitened as it is, is not so barren of invention but it can trade upon the staple of its own vice, without drawing upon their capital. The poor are not quite such servile imitators as they take them for. Some of them are very clever artists in their way. Here and there we find an original. Who taught the poor to steal, to pilfer? They did not go to the great for schoolmasters in these faculties surely. It is well if in some vices they allow us to be—no copyists. In no other sense is it true that the poor copy them, than as servants may be said to *take after* their masters and mistresses, when they succeed to their reversionary cold meats. If the master, from indisposition or some other cause, neglect his food, the servant dines notwithstanding.

"O, but (some will say) the force of example is great." We knew a lady who was so scrupulous on this head, that she would put up with the calls of the most impertinent visitor rather than let her servants say she was not at home, for fear of teaching her maid to tell an untruth; and this in the very face of the fact, which she knew well enough, and that the wench was one of the greatest liars upon the earth without teaching; so much so, that her mistress possibly never heard two words of consecutive truth from her in her life. But nature must go for nothing: example must be everything. This liar in grain, who never opened her mouth without a lie, must be guarded against a remote inference, which she (pretty casuist!) might possibly draw from a form of words —literally false, but essentially deceiving no one—that under some circumstances a fib might not be so exceedingly sinful—a fiction, too, not at all in her own way, or one that she could be suspected of adopting, for few servant-wenches care to be denied to visitors.

This word *example* reminds us of another fine word which is in use upon these occasions—*encouragement*. "People in our sphere must not be thought to give encouragement to such proceedings." To such a frantic height is this principle capable of being carried, that we have known individuals who have thought it within the scope of their influence to sanction despair, and give *eclat* to—suicide. A domestic in the family of a county member lately deceased, for love, or some unknown cause, cut his throat, but not successfully.

The poor fellow was otherwise much loved and respected; and great interest was used in his behalf upon his recovery, that he might be permitted to retain his place; his word being first pledged, not without some substantial sponsors to promise for him, that the like should never happen again. His master was inclinable to keep him, but his mistress thought otherwise; and John in the end was dismissed, her ladyship declaring that she "could not think of encouraging any such doings in the county."

## VI.

### THAT ENOUGH IS AS GOOD AS A FEAST.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

NOT a man, woman, or child in ten miles around Guildhall, who really believes this saying. The inventor of it did not believe it himself. It was made in revenge by somebody, who was disappointed of a regale. It is a vile cold-scrag-of-mutton sophism; a lie palmed upon the palate, which knows better things. If nothing else could be said for a feast, this is sufficient, that from the superflux there is usually something left for the next day. Morally interpreted, it belongs to a class of proverbs, which have a tendency to make us under-value *money*. Of this cast are those notable observations, that money is not health; riches cannot purchase everything: the metaphor which makes gold to be mere muck, with the morality which traces fine clothing to the sheep's back, and denounces pearl as the unhandsome excretion of an oyster. Hence, too, the phrase which imputes dirt to acres—a sophistry, so barefaced, that even the literal sense of it is true only in a wet season. This, and abundance of similar sage saws assuming to inculcate *content*, we verily believe to have been the invention of some cunning borrower, who had designs upon the purse of his wealthier neighbour, which he could only hope to carry by force of these verbal jugglings. Translate any one of these sayings out of the artful metonyme which envelops it, and the trick is apparent. Goodly legs and shoulders of mutton, exhilarating cordials, books, pictures, the opportunities of seeing foreign countries, independence, heart's ease, a man's own time to himself, are not *muck*—however we may be pleased to scandalize with that appellation the faithful metal that provides them for us.

## VII.

### OF TWO DISPUTANTS, THE WARMEST IS GENERALLY IN THE WRONG.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

OUR experience would lead us to quite an opposite conclusion. Temper, indeed, is no test of truth; but warmth and earnestness are a proof at least of a man's own conviction of the rectitude of that which he maintains. Coolness is as often the result of an unprincipled indifference to truth or falsehood, as of a sober confidence in a man's own side in a dispute. Nothing is more insulting sometimes than the appearance of this philosophic temper. There is little Titubus, the stammering law-stationer in Lincoln's Inn—we have seldom known this shrewd little fellow engaged in an argument where we were not convinced he had the best of it, if his tongue would but fairly have seconded him. When he has been spluttering excellent broken sense for an hour together, writhing and labouring to be delivered of the point of dispute—the very gist of the controversy knocking at his teeth, which like some obstinate iron-grating still obstructed its deliverance—his puny frame convulsed, and face reddening all over

at an unfairness in the logic which he wanted articulation to expose, it has moved our gall to see a smooth portly fellow of an adversary, that cared not a button for the merits of the question, by merely laying his hand upon the head of the stationer, and desiring him to be *calm* (your tall disputants have always the advantage), with a provoking sneer carry the argument clean from him in the opinion of all the bystanders, who have gone away clearly convinced that Titubus must have been in the wrong, because he was in a passion; and that Mr. ——, meaning his opponent, is one of the fairest, and at the same time one of the most dispassionate arguers breathing.

## VIII.

### THAT VERBAL ILLUSIONS ARE NOT WIT, BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT BEAR A TRANSLATION.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

THE same might be said of the wittiest local allusions. A custom is sometimes as difficult to explain to a foreigner as a pun. What would become of a great part of the wit of the last age, if it were tried by this test! How would certain topics, as aldermanity, cuckoldry, have sounded to a Terentian auditory, though Terence himself had been alive to translate them? *Senator urbanus*, with *Curruca* to boot for a synonyme, would but faintly have done the business. Words, involving notions, are hard enough to render; it is too much to expect us to translate a sound, and give an elegant version to a jingle. The Virgilian harmony is not translatable, but by substituting harmonious sounds in another language for it. To Latinize a pun, we must seek a pun in Latin, that will answer to it; as, to give an idea of the double endings in Hudibras, we must have recourse to a similar practice in the old monkish doggerel. Dennis, the fiercest oppugner of puns in ancient or modern times, professes himself highly tickled with the "a stick" chiming to "ecclesiastic." Yet what is this but a species of pun, a verbal consonance?

## IX.

### THAT THE WORST PUNS ARE THE BEST.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1826.)

IF by worst be only meant the most far-fetched and startling, we agree to it. A pun is not bound by the laws which limit nicer wit. It is a pistol let off at the ear: not a feather to tickle the intellect. It is an antic which does not stand upon manners, but comes bounding into the presence, and does not show the less coming for being dragged in sometimes by the head and shoulders. What though it limp a little, or prove defective in one leg?—all the better. A pun may easily be too curious and artificial. Who has not at one time or other been at a party of professors (himself perhaps an old offender in that line), where, after ringing a round of the most ingenious conceits, every man contributing his shot, and some there the most expert shooters of the day; after making a poor *word* run the gauntlet till it is ready to drop; after hunting and winding it through all the possible ambages of similar sounds; after squeezing and hauling, and tugging at it, till the very milk of it will not yield a drop further,—suddenly some obscure, unthought-of fellow in a corner, who was never 'prentice to the trade, whom the company, for very pity, passed over as we do by a known poor man when a money subscription is going round, no one calling upon him for his quota—has all at once come out with something so

whimsical, yet so pertinent; so brazen in its pretensions, yet so impossible to be denied; so exquisitely good, and so deplorably bad, at the same time,—that it has proved a Robin Hood's shot; anything ulterior to that is despaired of; and the party breaks up, unanimously voting it to be the very worst (that is, best) pun of the evening. This species of wit is the better for not being perfect in all its parts. What it gains in completeness, it loses in naturalness. The more exactly it satisfies the critical, the less hold it has upon some other faculties. The puns which are most entertaining are those which will least bear an analysis. Of this kind is the following, recorded, with a sort of stigma, in one of Swift's Miscellanies.

An Oxford scholar, meeting a porter who was carrying a hare through the streets, accosts him with this extraordinary question: "Prithee, friend, is that thy own hare, or a wig?"

There is no excusing this, and no resisting it. A man might blur ten sides of paper in attempting a defence of it against a critic who should be laughter-proof. The quibble in itself is not considerable. It is only a new turn given, by a little false pronunciation, to a very common, though not very courteous inquiry. Put by one gentleman to another at a dinner-party, it would have been vapid; to the mistress of the house, it would have shown much less wit than rudeness. We must take in the totality of time, place, and person; the pert look of the inquiring scholar, the desponding looks of the puzzled porter; the one stopping at leisure, the other hurrying on with his burthen; the innocent though rather abrupt tendency of the first member of the question, with the utter and inextricable irrelevancy of the second; the place—a public street not favourable to frivolous investigations; the affrontive quality of the primitive inquiry (the common question) invidiously transferred to the derivative (the new turn given to it) in the implied satire; namely, that few of that tribe are expected to eat of the good things which they carry, they being in most countries considered rather as the temporary trustees than owners of such dainties,—which the fellow was beginning to understand; but then the *wig* again comes in, and he can make nothing of it: all put together constitute a picture: Hogarth could have made it intelligible on canvas.

Yet nine out of ten critics will pronounce this a very bad pun because of the defectiveness in the concluding member, which is its very beauty, and constitutes the surprise. The same persons shall cry up for admirable the cold quibble from Virgil about the broken Cremona;* because it is made out in all its parts, and leaves nothing to the imagination. We venture to call it cold; because of thousands who have admired it, it would be difficult to find one who has heartily chuckled at it. As appealing to the judgment merely (setting the risible faculty aside), we must pronounce it a monument of curious felicity. But as some stories are said to be too good to be true, it may with equal truth be asserted of this bi-verbal allusion, that it is too good to be natural. One cannot help suspecting that the incident was invented to fit the line. It would have been better had it been less perfect. Like some Virgilian hemistichs, it has suffered by filling up. The *nimium Vicina* was enough in conscience; the *Cremonæ* afterwards loads it. It is in fact a double pun; and we have always observed that a superfœtation in this sort of wit is dangerous. When a man has said a good thing, it is seldom politic to follow it up. We do not care to be cheated a second time; or, perhaps, the mind of man (with reverence be it spoken) is not capacious enough to lodge two puns at a time. The impression, to be forcible, must be simultaneous and undivided.

* Swift.

## X.

### THAT YOU MUST LOVE ME, AND LOVE MY DOG.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, February, 1826.)

"GOOD sir, or madam, as it may be—we most willingly embrace the offer of your friendship. We long have known your excellent qualities. We have wished to have you nearer to us; to hold you within the very innermost fold of our heart. We can have no reserve towards a person of your open and noble nature. The frankness of your humour suits us exactly. We have been long looking for such a friend. Quick—let us disburthen our troubles into each other's bosom—let us make our single joys shine by reduplication—But *yap, yap, yap!*—what is this confounded cur? he has fastened his tooth, which is none of the bluntest, just in the fleshy part of my leg."

"It is my dog, sir. You must love him for my sake. Here, Test—Test—Test!"

"But he has bitten me."

"Ay, that he is apt to do, till you are better acquainted with him. I have had him three years. He nevsr bites me."

*Yap, yap, yap!*—"He is at it again."

"Oh, sir, you must not kick him. He does not like to be kicked. I expect my dog to be treated with all the respect due to myself."

"But do you always take him out with you, when you go a friendship-hunting?"

"Invariably. 'Tis the sweetest, prettiest, best conditioned animal. I call him my *test*—the touch-stone by which I try a friend. No one can properly be said to love me, who does not love him."

"Excuse us, dear sir—or madam aforesaid—if upon further consideration we are obliged to decline the otherwise invaluable offer of your friendship. We do not like dogs."

"Mighty well, sir—you know the conditions—you may have worse offers. Come along, Test."

The above dialogue is not so imaginary, but that, in the intercourse of life, we have had frequent occasions of breaking off an agreeable intimacy by reason of these canine appendages. They do not always come in the shape of dogs; they sometimes wear the more plausible and human character of kinsfolk, near acquaintances, my friend's friend, his partner, his wife, or his children. We could never yet form a friendship—not to speak of more delicate correspondences—however much to our taste, without the intervention of some third anomaly, some impertinent clog affixed to the relation—the understood *dog* in the proverb. The good things of life are not to be had singly, but come to us with a mixture; like a schoolboy's holiday, with a task affixed to the tail of it. What a delightful companion is . . . . if he did not always bring his tall cousin with him! He seems to grow with him; like some of those double births, which we remember to have read of with such wonder and delight in the old "Athenian Oracle," where Swift commenced author by writing Pindaric Odes (what a beginning for him!) upon Sir William Temple. There is the picture of the brother, with the little brother peeping out at his shoulder; a species of fraternity, which we have no name of kin close enough to comprehend. When . . . . comes, poking in his head and shoulders into your room, as if to feel his entry, you think, surely you have now got him to yourself—what a three hours' chat we shall have!—but, ever in the haunch of him, and before his diffident body is well disclosed in your apartment, appears the haunting shadow of the cousin, over-peering his modest kinsman, and sure to overlay the expected good talk with his insufferable procetity of stature, and uncorresponding dwarfishnesss

of observation. Misfortunes seldom come alone. 'Tis hard when a blessing comes accompanied. Cannot we like Sempronia, without sitting down to chess with her eternal brother? or know Sulpicia, without knowing all the round of her card-playing relations? must my friend's brethren of necessity be mine also? must we be hand and glove with Dick Selby the parson, or Jack Selby the calico printer, because W. S., who is neither, but a ripe wit and a critic, has the misfortune to claim common parentage with them? Let him lay down his brothers; and 'tis odds but we will cast him in a pair of ours (we have a superflux) to balance the concession. Let F. H. lay down his garrulous uncle; and Honorius dismiss his vapid wife, and superfluous establishment of six boys—things between boy and manhood—too ripe for play, too raw for conversation—that come in, impudently staring their father's old friend out of countenance; and will neither aid, nor let alone, the conference: that we may once more meet upon equal terms, as we were wont to do in the disengaged state of bachelorhood.

It is well if your friend, or mistress, be content with these canicular probations. Few young ladies but in this sense keep a dog. But when Rutilia hounds at you her tiger aunt; or Ruspina expects you to cherish and fondle her viper sister, whom she has preposterously taken into her bosom, to try stinging conclusions upon your constancy; they must not complain if the house be rather thin of suitors. Scylla must have broken off many excellent matches in her time, if she insisted upon all that loved her, loving her dogs also.

An excellent story to this moral is told of Merry, of Della Cruscan memory. In tender youth, he loved and courted a modest appanage to the Opera, in truth a dancer, who had won him by the artless contrast between her manners and situation. She seemed to him a native violet, that had been transplanted by some rude accident into that exotic and artificial hotbed. Nor, in truth, was she less genuine and sincere than she appeared to him. He wooed and won this flower. Only for appearance' sake, and for due honour to the bride's relations, she craved that she might have the attendance of her friends and kindred at the approaching solemnity. The request was too amiable not to be conceded; and in this solicitude for conciliating the goodwill of mere relations, he found a presage of her superior attentions to himself, when the golden shaft should have "killed the flock of all affections else." The morning came; and at the Star and Garter, Richmond—the place appointed for the breakfasting—accompanied with one English friend, he impatiently waited what reinforcements the bride should bring to grace the ceremony. A rich muster she had made. They came in six coaches—the whole corps du ballet—French, Italian, men and women. Monsieur de B., the famous *pirouetter* of the day, led his fair spouse, but scraggy, from the banks of the Seine. The Prima Donna had sent her excuse. But the first and second Buffa were there; and Signor Sc——, and Signora Ch——, and Madame V——, with a countless cavalcade besides of choruses, figurantes, at the sight of whom Merry afterwards declared, that "then for the first time it struck him seriously, that he was about to marry—a dancer." But there was no help for it. Besides, it was her day; these were, in fact, her friends and kinsfolk. The assemblage, though whimsical, was all very natural. But when the bride—handing out of the last coach a still more extraordinary figure than the rest—presented to him as her *father*—the gentleman that was to *give her away*—no less a person that Signor Delpini himself—with a sort of pride, as much as to say, See what I have brought to do us honour!—the thought of so extraordinary a paternity quite overcame him; and slipping away under some pretence from the bride and her motley adherents, poor Merry took horse from the back yard to the nearest sea-coast, from which, shipping himself to America, he shortly after consoled himself with a more congenial match in the person of Miss Brunton;

relieved from his intended clown father, and a bevy of painted Buffas for bridemaids.

## XI.

### THAT WE SHOULD RISE WITH THE LARK.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, February, 1826.)

At what precise minute that little airy musician doffs his night gear, and prepares to tune up his unseasonable matins, we are not naturalists enough to determine. But for a mere human gentleman—that has no orchestra business to call him from his warm bed to such preposterous exercises—we take ten, or half after ten (eleven, of course, during this Christmas solstice), to be the very earliest hour at which he can begin to think of abandoning his pillow. To think of it, we say; for to do it in earnest, requires another half-hour's good consideration. Not but that there are pretty sun-risings, as we are told, and such like gawds, abroad in the world, in summer time especially, some hours before what we have assigned; which a gentleman may see, as they say, only for getting up. But, having been tempted once or twice in ealirer life, to assist at those ceremonies, we confess our curiosity abated. We are no longer ambitious of being the sun's courtiers, to attend at his morning levées. We hold the good hours of the dawn too sacred to waste them upon such observances; which have in them, besides, something Pagan and Persic. To say truth, we never anticipated our usual hour, or got up with the sun (as 'tis called), to go a journey, or upon a foolish whole day's pleasuring, but we suffered for it all the long hours after in listlessness and headaches; Nature herself sufficiently declaring her sense of our presumption, in aspiring to regulate our frail waking courses by the measures of that celestial and sleepless traveller. We deny not that there is something sprightly and vigorous, at the outset especially, in these break-of-day excursions. It is flattering to get the start of a lazy world; to conquer death by proxy in his image. But the seeds of sleep and mortality are in us; and we pay usually in strange qualms, before night falls, the penalty of the unnatural inversion. Therefore, while the busy part of mankind are fast huddling on their clothes, are already up and about their occupations, content to have swallowed their sleep by wholesale; we choose to linger a-bed and digest our dreams. It is the very time to recombine the wandering images which night in a confused mass presented; to snatch them from forgetfulness, to shape and mould them. Some people have no good of their dreams. Like fast feeders, they gulp them too grossly, to taste them curiously. We love to chew the cud of a foregone vision; to collect the scattered rays of a brighter phantasm, or act over again, with firmer nerves, the sadder nocturnal tragedies; to drag into daylight a struggling and half-vanishing night-mare; to handle and examine the terrors of the airy solaces. We have too much respect for these spiritual communications, to let them go so lightly. We are not so stupid, or so careless, as that Imperial forgetter of his dreams, that we should need a seer to remind us of the form of them. They seem to us to have as much significance as our waking concerns; or rather to import us more nearly, as more nearly we approach by years to the shadowy world, whither we are hastening. We have shaken hands with the world's business; we have done with it; we have discharged ourselves of it. Why should we get up? we have neither suit to solicit, nor affairs to manage. The drama has shut in upon us at the fourth act. We have nothing here to expect, but in a short time a sick-bed, and a dismissal. We delight to anticipate death by such shadows as night affords. We are already half acquainted with ghosts. We were never much in the world. Disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions. Our spirits showed grey before our hairs. The

mighty changes of the world already appear as but the vain stuff out of which dramas are composed. We have asked no more of life than what the mimic images in play-houses present us with. Even those types have waxed fainter. Our clock appears to have struck. We are SUPERANNUATED. In this dearth of mundane satisfaction, we contract politic alliances with shadows. It is good to have friends at court. The abstracted media of dreams seem no ill introduction to that spiritual presence upon which, in no long time, we expect to be thrown. We are trying to know a little of the usages of that colony; to learn the language, and the faces we shall meet with there, that we may be the less awkward at our first coming among them. We willingly call a phantom our fellow, as knowing we shall soon be of their dark companionship. Therefore we cherish dreams. We try to spell in them the alphabet of the invisible world, and think we know already how it shall be with us. Those uncouth shapes, which, while we clung to flesh and blood, affrighted us, have become familiar. We feel attenuated into their meagre essences, and have given the hand of half-way approach to incorporeal being. We once thought life to be something; but it has unaccountably fallen from us before its time. Therefore we choose to dally with visions. The sun has no purposes of ours to light us to. Why should we get up?

## XII.

### THAT WE SHOULD LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, February, 1826.)

WE could never quite understand the philosophy of this arrangement, or the wisdom of our ancestors in sending us for instruction to these woolly bedfellows. A sheep, when it is dark, has nothing to do but to shut his silly eyes, and sleep if he can. Man found out long sixes.—Hail candle-light! without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindliest luminary of the three—if we may not rather style thee their radiant deputy, mild viceroy of the moon!—We love to read, talk, sit silent, eat, drink, sleep, by candle-light. They are everybody's sun and moon. This is our peculiar and household planet. Wanting it, what savage unsociable nights must our ancestors have spent, wintering in caves and unillumined fastnesses! They must have lain about and grumbled at one another in the dark. What repartees could have passed, when you must have felt about for a smile, and handled a neighbour's cheek to be sure that he understood it? This accounts for the seriousness of the elder poetry. It has a sombre cast (try Hesiod or Ossian), derived from the tradition of those unlanterned nights. Jokes came in with candles. We wonder how they saw to pick up a pin, if they had any. How did they sup? what a mélange of chance carving they must have made of it!—here one had got a leg of a goat, when he wanted a horse's shoulder—there another had dipped his scooped palm in a kid-skin of wild honey, when he meditated right mare's milk. There is neither good eating nor drinking in fresco. Who, even in these civilized times, has never experienced this, when at some economic table he has commenced dining after dusk, and waited for the flavour till the lights came? The senses absolutely give and take reciprocally. Can you tell pork from veal in the dark? or distinguish Sherries from pure Malaga? Take away the candle from the smoking man; by the glimmering of the left ashes, he knows that he is still smoking, but he knows it only by an inference; till the restored light, coming in aid of the olfactories, reveals to both senses the full aroma. Then how he redoubles his puffs! how he burnishes!—There is absolutely no such thing as reading, but by a candle. We have tried the affectation of a book at noonday in gardens, and in sultry arbours; but it was labour thrown away. Those gay motes in the beam come about you, hovering and teasing, like so many

coquettes, that will have you all to their self, and are jealous of your abstractions. By the midnight taper, the writer digests his meditations. By the same light, we must approach to their perusal, if we would catch the flame, the odour. It is a mockery, all that is reported of the influential Phœbus. No true poem ever owed its birth to the sun's light. They are abstracted works—

> "Things that were born, when none but the still night,
> And his dumb candle, saw his pinching throes."

Marry, daylight—daylight might furnish the images, the crude material; but for the fine shapings, the true turning and filing (as mine author hath it), they must be content to hold their inspiration of the candle. The mild internal light, that reveals them, like fires on the domestic hearth, goes out in the sunshine. Night and silence call out the starry fancies. Milton's Morning Hymn on Paradise, we would hold a good wager, was penned at midnight; and Taylor's richer description of a sunrise smells decidedly of the taper. Even ourself, in these our humbler lucubrations, tune our best measured cadences (Prose has her cadences) not unfrequently to the charm of the drowsier watchman, "blessing the doors;" or the wild sweep of winds at midnight. Even now a loftier speculation than we have yet attempted, courts our endeavour. We would indite something about the Solar System.—*Betty, bring the candles.*

## XIII.

### THAT HANDSOME IS THAT HANDSOME DOES.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, March, 1826.)

THOSE who use this proverb can never have seen Mrs. Conrady.

The soul, if we may believe Plotinus, is a ray from the celestial beauty. As she partakes more or less of this heavenly light, she informs, with corresponding characters, the fleshly tenement which she chooses, and frames to herself a suitable mansion.

All which only proves that the soul of Mrs. Conrady, in her pre-existent state, was no great judge of architecture.

To the same effect, in a Hymn in honour of Beauty, divine Spenser, *platonizing*, sings:—

> —— "Every spirit as it is more pure,
> And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
> So it the fairer body doth procure
> To habit in, and it more fairly dight
> With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
> For of the soul the body form doth take:
> For soul is form, and doth the body make."

But Spenser, it is clear, never saw Mrs. Conrady.

These poets, we find, are no safe guides in philosophy; for here, in his very next stanza but one, is a saving clause, which throws us all out again, and leaves us as much to seek as ever:—

> "Yet oft it falls, that many a gentle mind
> Dwells in deformed tabernacle drown'd,
> Either by chance against the course of kind,
> Or through unaptness in the substance found,
> Which it assumed of some stubborn ground,
> That will not yield unto her form's direction,
> But is perform'd with some foul imperfection."

From which it would follow, that Spenser had seen somebody like Mrs. Conrady.

The spirit of this good lady—her precious *anima*—must have stumbled upon one of these untoward tabernacles which he speaks of. A more rebellious commodity of clay for a ground, as the poet calls it, no gentle mind—and sure hers is one of the gentlest—ever had to deal with.

Pondering upon her inexplicable visage—inexplicable, we mean, but by this modification of the theory—we have come to a conclusion that, if one must be plain, it is better to be plain all over, than, amidst a tolerable residue of features, to hang out one that shall be exceptionable. No one can say of Mrs. Conrady's countenance, that it would be better if she had but a nose. It is impossible to pull her to pieces in this manner. We have seen the most malicious beauties of her own sex baffled in the attempt at a selection. The *tout ensemble* defies particularizing. It is too complete—too consistent, as we may say—to admit of these invidious reservations. It is not as if some Apelles had picked out here a lip—and there a chin—out of the collected ugliness of Greece, to frame a model by. It is a symmetrical whole. We challenge the minutest connoisseur to cavil at any part or parcel of the countenance in question; to say that this, or that, is improperly placed. We are convinced that true ugliness, no less than is affirmed of true beauty, is the result of harmony. Like that, too, it reigns without a competitor. No one ever saw Mrs. Conready, without pronouncing her to be the plainest woman that he ever met with in the course of his life. The first time that you are indulged with a sight of her face, is an era in your existence ever after. You are glad to have seen it—like Stonehenge. No one can pretend to forget it. No one ever apologized to her for meeting her in the street on such a day and not knowing her: the pretext would be too bare. Nobody can mistake her for another. Nobody can say of her, "I think I have seen that face somewhere, but I cannot call to mind where." You must remember that in such a parlour it first struck you—like a bust. You wondered where the owner of the house had picked it up. You wondered more when it began to move its lips—so mildly too! No one ever thought of asking her to sit for her picture. Lockets are for remembrance; and it would be clearly superfluous to hang an image at your heart, which, once seen, can never be out of it. It is not a mean face either; its entire originality precludes that. Neither is it of that order of plain faces which improve upon acquaintance. Some very good but ordinary people, by an unwearied perseverance in good office, put a cheat upon our eyes; juggle our senses out of their natural impressions; and set us upon discovering good indications in a countenance, which at first sight promised nothing less. We detect gentleness, which had escaped us, lurking about an under lip. But when Mrs. Conrady has done you a service, her face remains the same; when she has done you a thousand, and you know that she is ready to double the number, still it is that individual face. Neither can you say of it, that it would be a good face if it was not marked by the smallpox—a compliment which is always more admissive than excusatory—for either Mrs. Conrady never had the smallpox; or, as we say, took it kindly. No, it stands upon its own merits fairly. There it is. It is her mark, her token; that which she is known by.

## XIV.

### THAT HOME IS HOME THOUGH IT IS NEVER SO HOMELY.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, March, 1826.)

HOMES there are, we are sure, that are no homes: the home of the very poor man, and another which we shall speak of presently. Crowded places to cheap entertainment, and the benches of alehouses, if they could speak, might bear

mournful testimony to the first. To them the very poor man resorts for an image of the home, which he cannot find at home. For a starved grate, and a scanty firing, that is not enough to keep alive the natural heat in the fingers of so many shivering children with their mother, he finds in the depth of winter always a blazing hearth, and a hob to warm his pittance of beer by. Instead of the clamours of a wife, made gaunt by famishing, he meets with a cheerful attendance beyond the merits of the trifle which he can afford to spend. He has companions which his home denies him, for the very poor man has no visitors. He can look into the goings on of the world, and speak a little to politics. At home there are no politics stirring, but the domestic. All interests, real or imaginary, all topics that should expand the mind of man, and connect him to a sympathy with general existence, are crushed in the absorbing consideration of food to be obtained for the family.

Beyond the price of bread, news is senseless and impertinent. At home there is no larder. Here there is at least a show of plenty; and while he cooks his lean scrap of butcher's meat before the common bars, or munches his humbler cold viands, his relishing bread and cheese with an onion, in a corner, where no one reflects upon his poverty, he has sight of the substantial joint providing for the landlord and his family. He takes an interest in the dressing of it; and while he assists in removing the trivet from the fire, he feels that there is such a thing as beef and cabbage, which he was beginning to forget at home. All this while he deserts his wife and children. But what wife, and what children? Prosperous men, who object to this desertion, imagine to themselves some clean contented family like that which they go home to. But look at the countenance of the poor wives who follow and persecute their good man to the door of the public-house, which he is about to enter, when something like shame would restrain him, if stronger misery did not induce him to pass the threshold. That face, ground by want, in which every cheerful, every conversable lineament has been long effaced by misery,—is that a face to stay at home with? is it more a woman or a wild cat? alas! it is the face of the wife of his youth, that once smiled upon him. It can smile no longer. What comforts can it share? what burthens can it lighten? Oh, 'tis a fine thing to talk of the humble meal shared together! But what if there be no bread in the cupboard? The innocent prattle of his children takes out the sting of a man's poverty. But the children of the very poor do not prattle. It is none of the least frightful features in that condition, that there is no childishness in its dwellings. Poor people, said a sensible old nurse to us once, do not bring up their children: they drag them up. The little careless darling of the wealthier nursery, in their hovel is transformed betimes into a premature reflecting person. No one has time to dandle it, no one thinks it worth while to coax it, to soothe it, to toss it up and down, to humour it. There is none to kiss away its tears. If it cries, it can only be beaten. It has been prettily said that "a babe is fed with milk and praise." But the aliment of this poor babe was thin, unnourishing; the return to its little baby-tricks, and efforts to engage attention, bitter ceaseless objurgation. It never had a toy or knew what a coral meant. It grew up without the lullaby of nurses, it was a stranger to the patient fondle, the hushing caress, the attracting novelty, the costlier plaything, or the cheaper off-hand contrivance to divert the child; the prattled nonsense (best sense to it), the wise impertinences, the wholesome lies, the apt story interposed, that puts a stop to present sufferings, and awakens the passion of young wonder. It was never sung to—no one ever told to it a tale of the nursery. It was dragged up, to live or to die as it happened. It had no young dreams. It broke at once into the iron realities of life. A child exists not for the very poor as any object of dalliance; it is only another mouth to be fed, a pair of little hands to be betimes inured to labour. It is the rival, till it can be the co-operator, for food with the parent. It is never his mirth, his

diversion, his solace; it never makes him young again, with recalling his young times. The children of the very poor have no young times. It makes the very heart to bleed to overhear the casual street-talk between a poor woman and her little girl, a woman of the better sort of poor, in a condition rather above the squalid beings which we have been contemplating. It is not of toys, of nursery books, of summer holidays (fitting that age); of the promised sight, or play; of praised sufficiency at school. It is of mangling and clear-starching, of the price of coals, or of potatoes. The questions of the child, that should be the very outpourings of curiosity in idleness, are marked with forecast and melancholy providence. It has come to be a woman before it was a child. It has learned to go to market; it chaffers, it haggles, it envies, it murmurs; it is knowing, acute, sharpened; it never prattles. Had we not reason to say, that the home of the very poor is no home?

There is yet another home, which we are constrained to deny to be one. It has a larder, which the home of the poor man wants; its fireside conveniences, of which the poor dream not. But with all this, it is no home. It is—the house of the man that is infested with many visitors. May we be branded for the veriest churl, if we deny our heart to the many noble-hearted friends that at times exchange their dwelling for our poor roof! It is not of guests that we complain, but of endless, purposeless visitants; droppers in, as they are called. We sometimes wonder from what sky they fall. It is the very error of the position of our lodging; its horoscopy was ill-calculated, being just situate in a medium—a plaguy suburban mid-space—fitted to catch idlers from town or country. We are older than we were, and age is easily put out of its way. We have fewer sands in our glass to reckon upon, and we cannot brook to see them drop in endlessly succeeding impertinences. At our time of life, to be alone sometimes is as needful as sleep. It is the refreshing sleep of the day. The growing infirmities of age manifest themselves in nothing more strongly, than in an inveterate dislike of interruption. The thing which we are doing, we wish to be permitted to do. We have neither much knowledge nor devices; but there are fewer in the place to which we hasten. We are not willingly put out of our way, even at a game of nine-pins. While youth was, we had vast reversions in time future; we are reduced to a present pittance, and obliged to economize in that article. We bleed away our moments now as hardly as our ducats. We cannot bear to have our thin wardrobe eaten and fretted into by moths. We are willing to barter our good time with a friend, who gives us in exchange his own. Herein is the distinction between the genuine guest and the visitant. This latter takes your good time, and gives you his bad in exchange. The guest is domestic to you as your good cat, or household bird: the visitant is your fly, that flaps in at your window, and out again, leaving nothing but a sense of disturbance and victuals spoiled. The inferior functions of life begin to move heavily. We cannot concoct our food with interruptions. Our chief meal, to be nutritive, must be solitary. With difficulty we can eat before a guest; and never understood what the relish of public feasting meant. Meats have no sapor, nor digestion fair play, in a crowd. The unexpected coming in of a visitant stops the machine. There is a punctual generation who time their calls to the precise commencement of your dining-hour—not to eat—but to see you eat. Our knife and fork drop instinctively, and we feel that we have swallowed our latest morsel. Others again show their genius, as we have said, in knocking the moment you have just sat down to a book. They have a peculiar compassionating sneer, with which they "hope that they do not interrupt your studies." Though they flutter off the next moment, to carry their impertinences to the nearest student that they can call their friend, the tone of the book is spoiled; we shut the leaves, and, with Dante's lovers, read no more that day. It were well if the effect of intrusion were simply co-extensive with its presence; but it mars all the good hours afterwards. These

scratches in appearance leave an orifice that closes not hastily. "It is a prostitution of the bravery of friendship," says worthy Bishop Taylor, "to spend it upon impertinent people, who are, it may be, loads to their families, but can never ease my loads." This is the secret of their gaddings, their visits, and morning calls. They too have homes, which are—no homes.

## XV.

### THAT WE MUST NOT LOOK A GIFT-HORSE IN THE MOUTH.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, April, 1826.)

NOT a lady's age in the parish register. We hope we have more delicacy than to do either: but some faces spare us the trouble of these *dental* inquiries. And what if the beast, which my friend would force upon my acceptance, prove, upon the face of it, a sorry Rozinante, a lean ill-favoured jade, whom no gentleman could think of setting up in his stables? Must I, rather than not be obliged to my friend, make her a companion to Eclipse or Lightfoot? A horse-giver, no more than a horse-seller, has a right to palm his spavined article upon us for good ware. An equivalent is expected in either case; and, with my own good will, I would no more be cheated out of my thanks, than out of my money. Some people have a knack of putting upon you gifts of no real value, to engage you to substantial gratitude. We thank them for nothing. Our friend Mitis carries this humour of never refusing a present, to the very point of absurdity—if it were possible to couple the ridiculous with so much mistaken delicacy, and real good-nature. Not an apartment in his fine house (and he has a true taste in household decorations), but is stuffed up with some preposterous print or mirror—the worst adapted to his panels that may be—the presents of his friends that know his weakness; while his noble Vandykes are displaced, to make room for a set of daubs, the work of some wretched artist of his acquaintance, who, having had them returned upon his hands for bad likenesses, finds his account in bestowing them here gratis. The good creature has not the heart to mortify the painter at the expense of an honest refusal. It is pleasant (if it did not vex one at the same time) to see him sitting in his dining parlour, surrounded with obscure aunts and cousins to God knows whom, while the true Lady Marys and Lady Bettys of his own honourable family, in favour to these adopted frights, are consigned to the staircase and the lumber-room. In like manner his goodly shelves are one by one stripped of his favourite old authors, to give place to a collection of presentation copies—the flower and brain of modern poetry. A presentation copy, reader—if haply you are yet innocent of such favours—is a copy of a book which does not sell, sent you by the author, with his foolish autograph at the beginning of it; for which, if a stranger, he only demands your friendship; if a brother author, he expects from you a book of yours which does sell, in return. We can speak to experience, having by us a tolerable assortment of these gift-horses. Not to ride a metaphor to death—we are willing to acknowledge, that in some gifts there is sense. A duplicate out of a friend's library (where he has more than one copy of a rare author) is intelligible. There are favours, short of the pecuniary—a thing not fit to be hinted at among gentlemen—which confer as much grace upon the acceptor as the offerer: the kind, we confess, which is most to our palate, is of those little conciliatory missives, which for their vehicle generally choose a hamper—little odd presents of game, fruit, perhaps wine—though it is essential to the delicacy of the latter that it be home-made. We love to have our friend in the country sitting thus at our table by proxy; to apprehend his presence (though a hundred miles may be between us) by a

turkey, whose goodly aspect reflects to us his "plump corpusculum;" to taste him in grouse or woodcock; to feel him gliding down in the toast peculiar to the latter; to concorporate him in a slice of Canterbury brawn. This is indeed to have him within ourselves; to know him intimately: such participation is, methinks, unitive, as the old theologians phrase it. For these considerations we should be sorry if certain restrictive regulations, which are thought to bear hard upon the peasantry of this country, were entirely done away with. A hare, as the law now stands, makes many friends. Caius conciliates Titius (knowing his *goût*) with a leash of partridges. Titius (suspecting his partiality for them) passes them to Lucius; who, in his turn, preferring his friend's relish to his own, makes them over to Marcius: till in their ever-widening progress, and round of unconscious circum-migration, they distribute the seeds of harmony over half a parish. We are well disposed to this kind of sensible remembrances; and are the less apt to be taken by those little airy tokens—impalpable to the palate—which, under the names of rings, lockets, keep-sakes, amuse some people's fancy mightily. We could never away with these indigestible trifles. They are the very kickshaws and foppery of friendship.

## XVI.

### THAT A DEFORMED PERSON IS A LORD.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1826.)

After a careful perusal of the most approved works that treat of nobility, and of its origin in these realms in particular, we are left very much in the dark as to the original patent in which this branch of it is recognized. Neither Camden in his "Etymologie and Original of Barons," nor Dugdale in his "Baronage of England," nor Selden (a more exact and laborious inquirer than either) in his "Titles of Honour" afford a glimpse of satisfaction upon the subject. There is an heraldic term, indeed, which seems to imply gentility, and the right to coat armour (but nothing further), in persons thus qualified. But the *sinister bend* is more probably interpreted by the best writers on this science, of some irregularity of birth than of bodily conformation. Nobility is either hereditary or by creation, commonly called patent. Of the former kind, the title in question cannot be, seeing that the notion of it is limited to a personal distinction which does not necessarily follow in the blood. Honours of this nature, as Mr. Anstey very well observes, descend, moreover, in a *right line.* It must be by patent, then, if anything. But who can show it? How comes it to be dormant? Under what king's reign is it patented? Among the grounds of nobility cited by the learned Mr. Ashmole, after "Services in the Field or in the Council Chamber," he judiciously sets down "Honours conferred by the sovereign out of mere benevolence, or as favouring one subject rather than another for some likeness or conformity observed (or but supposed) in him to the royal nature;" and instances the graces showered upon Charles Brandon, who, "in his goodly person being thought not a little to favour the port and bearing of the king's own majesty, was by that sovereign, King Henry the Eighth, for some or one of these respects, highly promoted and preferred." Here, if anywhere, we thought we had discovered a clue to our researches. But after a painful investigation of the rolls and records under the reign of Richard the Third, or "Richard Crouchback," as he is more usually designated in the chronicles,—from a traditionary stoop or gibbosity in that part,—we do not find that that monarch conferred any such lordships as here pretended, upon any subject or subjects, on a simple plea of "conformity" in that respect to the "royal nature." The posture of affairs, in those tumultuous times preceding the battle of Bosworth, possibly left him at no leisure to attend to such

niceties. Further than his reign, we have not extended our inquiries; the kings of England who preceded or followed him being generally described by historians to have been of straight and clean limbs, the "natural derivative," says Daniel,* "of high blood if not its primitive recommendation to such ennoblement, as denoting strength and martial prowess,—the qualities set most by in that fighting age." Another motive, which inclines us to scruple the validity of this claim, is the remarkable fact, that none of the persons in whom the right is supposed to be vested do ever insist upon it themselves. There is no instance of any of them "suing his patent," as the law books call it; much less of his having actually stepped up into his proper seat, as, so qualified, we might expect that some of them would have had the spirit to do, in the House of Lords. On the contrary, it seems to be a distinction thrust upon them. "Their title of 'lord,'" says one of their own body, speaking of the common people, "I never much valued, and now I entirely despise; and yet they will force it upon me as an honour which they have a right to bestow, and which I have none to refuse." Upon a dispassionate review of the subject, we are disposed to believe that there is no right to the peerage incident to mere bodily configuration; that the title in dispute is merely honorary, and depending upon the breath of the common people, which in these realms is so far from the power of conferring nobility, that the ablest constitutionalists have agreed in nothing more unanimously than in the maxim, that "the king is the sole fountain of honour."

## XVII.

### THAT A SULKY TEMPER IS A MISFORTUNE.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, September, 1826.)

WE grant that it is, and a very serious one—to a man's friends, and to all that have to do with him; but whether the condition of the man himself is so much to be deplored, may admit of a question. We can speak a little to it, being ourself but lately recovered—we whisper it in confidence, reader—out of a long and desperate fit of the sullens. Was the cure a blessing? The conviction which wrought it, came too clearly to leave a scruple of the fanciful injuries—for they were mere fancies—which had provoked the humour. But the humour itself was too self-pleasing, while it lasted—we know how bare we lay ourself in the confession—to be abandoned all at once with the grounds of it. We still brood over wrongs, which we know to have been imaginary; and for our old acquaintance, N——, whom we find to have been a truer friend than we took him for, we substitute some phantom—a Caius or a Titius—as like him as we dare to form it, to wreak our yet unsatisfied resentments on. It is mortifying to fall at once from the pinnacle of neglect; to forego the idea of having been ill-used and contumaciously treated by an old friend. The first thing to aggrandize a man in his own conceit, is to conceive of himself as neglected. There let him fix if he can. To undeceive him is to deprive him of the most tickling morsel within the range of self-complacency. No flattery can come near it. Happy is he who suspects his friend of an injustice; but supremely blessed, who thinks all his friends in a conspiracy to depress and undervalue him. There is a pleasure (we sing not to the profane), far beyond the reach of all that the world counts joy—a deep, enduring satisfaction in the depths, where the superficial seek it not, of discontent. Were we to recite one half of this mystery, which we were let into by our late dissatisfaction, all the world would be in love with disrespect; we should wear a slight for a bracelet, and neglects and contumacies would be the only matter for courtship. Unlike to that mys-

* History of England, "Temporibus Edwardi Prim iet sequentibus."

terious book in the Apocalypse, the study of this mystery is unpalatable only in the commencement. The first sting of a suspicion is greivous; but wait—out of that wound, which to flesh and blood seemed so difficult, there is balm and honey to be extracted. Your friend passed you on such or such a day,—having in his company one that you conceived worse than ambiguously disposed towards you,—passed you in the street without notice. To be sure he is something short-sighted; and it was in your power to have accosted *him*. But facts and sane inferences are trifles to a true adept in the science of dissatisfaction. He must have seen you; and S——, who was with him, must have been the cause of the contempt. It galls you, and well it may. But have patience. Go home, and make the worst of it, and you are a made man from this time. Shut yourself up, and—rejecting, as an enemy to your peace, every whispering suggestion that but insinuates there may be a mistake—reflect seriously upon the many lesser instances which you had begun to perceive, in proof of your friend's disaffection towards you. None of them singly was much to the purpose, but the aggregate weight is positive; and you have this last affront to clench them. Thus far the process is anything but agreeable. But now to your relief comes in the comparative faculty. You conjure up all the kind feelings you have had for your friend; what you have been to him, and what you would have been to him, if he would have suffered you; how you defended him in this or that place; and his good name—his literary reputation and so forth, was always dearer to you than your own! Your heart, spite of itself, yearns towards him. You could weep tears of blood, but for a restraining pride. How say you? do you not yet begin to apprehend a comfort? some allay of sweetness in the bitter waters! Stop not here, nor penuriously cheat yourself of your reversions. You are on vantage ground. Enlarge your speculations, and take in the rest of your friends, as a spark kindles more sparks. Was there one among them, who has not to you proved hollow, false, slippery as water? Begin to think that the relation itself is inconsistent with mortality. That the very idea of friendship, with its component parts, as honour, fidelity, steadiness, exists but in your single bosom. Image yourself to yourself, as the only possible friend in a world incapable of that communion. Now the gloom thickens. The little star of self-love twinkles, that is to encourage you through deeper glooms than this. You are not yet at the half-point of your elevation. You are not yet, believe me, half sulky enough. Adverting to the world in general (as these circles in the mind will spread to infinity), reflect with what strange injustice you have been treated in quarters where (setting gratitude and the expectation of friendly returns aside as chimeras), you pretended no claim beyond justice, the naked due of all men. Think the very idea of right and fit fled from the earth, or your breast the solitary receptacle of it, till you have swelled yourself into at least one hemisphere; the other being the vast Arabia Stony of your friends and the world aforesaid. To grow bigger every moment in your own conceit, and the world to lessen: to deify yourself at the expense of your species; to judge the world—this is the acme and supreme point of your mystery—these the true PLEASURES of SULKINESS.

We profess no more of this grand secret than what ourself experimented on one rainy afternoon in the last week, sulking in our study. We had proceeded to the penultimate point, at which the true adept seldom stops, where the consideration of benefit forgot is about to merge in the meditation of general injustice—when a knock at the door was followed by the entrance of the very friend, whose not seeing of us in the morning (for we will now confess the case our own) an accidental oversight, had given rise to so much agreeable generalization! To mortify us still more, and take down the whole flattering superstructure which pride had piled upon neglect, he had brought in his hand the identical S——, in whose favour we had suspected him of the contumacy. Asseverations were needless, where the frank manner of them both was convic-

tive of the injurious nature of the suspicion. We fancied that they perceived our embarrassment; but were too proud, or something else, to confess to the secret of it. We had been but too lately in the condition of the noble patient in Argos:

> Qui se credebat miros audire tragœdos,
> In vacuo lætus sessor plausorque theatro—

and could have exclaimed with equal reason against the friendly hands that cured us—

> Pol me occidistis, amici,
> Non servâstis, ait; cui sic extorta voluptas,
> Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error.

# Criticisms, etc.

## Fragments from Burton.

(*Appended to "John Woodvil,"* 1802.)

[When this paper was originally published at the head of the miscellaneous writings appended to the first imprint of John Woodvil, it was gravely entitled—as though it were authentic instead of simply imitative—"Curious Fragments extracted from a Commonplace Book which belonged to Robert Burton, the famous author of the Anatomy of Melancholy."]

### EXTRACT I.

I DEMOCRITUS Junior have put my finishing pen to a tractate *De Melancholia*, this day, December 5, 1620. First, I blesse the Trinity, which hath given me health to prosecute my worthlesse studies thus far, and make supplication with a *Laus Deo*, if in any case these my poor labours may be found instrumental to weede out black melancholy, carking cares, harte-grief, from the mind of man. *Sed hoc magis volo quam expecto.*

I turn now to my book, *i nunc liber*, *goe forth, my brave Anatomy, child of my brain-sweat*, and yee, *candidi lectores*, lo! here I give him up to you, even do with him what you please, my masters. Some, I suppose, will applaud, commend, cry him up (these are my friends) hee is a *flos rarus*, forsooth, a none-such, a Phœnix, (concerning whom see *Plinius* and *Mandeuille*, though *Fienus de monstris* doubteth at large of such a bird, whom *Montaltus* confuting argueth to have been a man *malæ scrupolositatis*, of a weak and cowardlie faith: *Christopherus a Vega* is with him in this). Others again will blame, hiss, reprehende in many things, cry down altogether, my collections, for crude, inept, putid, *post cœnam scripta*, *Coryate could write better upon a full meal*, verbose, incrudite, and not sufficiently abounding in authorities *dogmata*, sentences, of learneder writers which have been before me, when as that first named sort clean otherwise judge of my labours to bee nothing else but a *messe of opinions*, a vortex attracting indiscriminate, gold, pearls, hay, straw, wood, excrement, an exchange, tavern, marte, for foreigners to congregate, Danes, Swedes, Hollanders, Lombards, so many strange faces, dresses, salutations, languages, all which *Wolfius* behelde with great contente upon the Venetian Rialto, as he describes diffusedly in his book the world's Epitome, which *Sannazar* so bepraiseth, *e contra* our Polydore can see nothing in it; they call me singular, a pedant, fantastic, words of reproach in this age, which is all too neoteric and light for my humour.

One cometh to me sighing, complaining. He expected universal remedies in my Anatomy; so many cures as there are distemperatures among men. I have not put his affection in my cases. Hear you his case. My fine Sir is a lover, an *inamorato*, a Pyramus, a Romeo; he walks seven years disconsolate, moping, becauset he cannot enjoy his miss, *insanus amor* is his melancholy, the man is mad; *delirat*, he dotes; all this while his Glycera is rude, spiteful, not

to be entreated, churlish, spits at him, yet exceeding fair, gentle eyes (which is a beauty), hair lustrous and *smiling*, the trope is none of mine, *Æneas Sylvius* hath *crines ridentes*—in conclusion she is wedded to his rival, a boore, a *Corydon*, a rustic, *omnino ignarus, he can scarce construe Corderius*, yet haughty, fantastic, *opiniatre.* The lover travels, goes into foreign parts, peregrinates, *amoris ergo*, sees manners, customs, not English, converses with pilgrims, lying travellers, monks, hermits, those cattle, pedlars, travelling gentry, *Egyptians*, natural wonders, unicorns (though *Aldobrandus* will have them to be figments), satyrs, semi-viri, apes, monkeys, baboons, curiosities artificial, *pyramides*, Virgilius his tombe, relicks, bones, which are nothing but ivory as *Melancthon* judges, though *Cornutus* leaneth to think them bones of dogs, cats, (why not men?) which subtill priests vouch to have been saints, martyrs, *heu Pietas!* By that time he has ended his course, *fugit hora*, seven other years are expired, gone by, time is, he should return, he taketh ship for Britaine, much desired of his friends, *favebant venti*, *Neptune is curteis*, after some weekes at sea he landeth, rides post to town, greets his family, kinsmen, *compotores, those jokers his friends that were wont to tipple with him at alehouses;* these wonder now to see the change, *quantum mutatus, the man is quite another thing*, he is disenthralled, manumitted, he wonders what so bewitched him, he can now both see, hear, smell, handle, converse with his mistress, single by reason of the death of his rival, a widow having children, grown willing, prompt, amorous, shewing no such great dislike to second nuptials, hee might have her for asking, no such thing, his mind is changed, he loathes his former meat, had liever eat ratsbane, aconite, his humour is to die a batchelour; marke the conclusion. In this humour of celibate seven other years are consumed in idleness, sloth, world's pleasures, which fatigate, satiate, induce wearinesse, vapours, *tædium vitæ:* When upon a day, behold a wonder, *redit Amor*, the man is as sick as ever, he is commenced lover upon the old stock, walks with his hand thrust into his bosom for negligence, moping he leans his head, face yellow, beard flowing and incomposite, eyes sunken, *anhelus, breath wheezy and asthmatical by reason of over-much sighing:* society he abhors, solitude is but a hell, what shall he doe? all this while his mistresse is forward, coming, *amantissima, ready to jump at once into his mouth*, her he hateth, feels disgust when she is but mentioned, thinks her ugly, old, a painted Jezabeel, Alectó, Megara, and Tisiphone all at once, a Corinthian Lais, a strumpet, only not handsome; that which he affecteth so much, that which drives him mad, distracted, phrenetic, beside himself, is no beauty which lives, nothing *in rerum naturâ* (so he might entertain a hope of a cure), but something *which is not*, can never be, a certain *fantastic opinion notional image* of his mistresse, *that which she was*, and that which hee thought her to be, in former times, how beautiful! torments him, frets him, follows him, makes him that he wishes to die.

This Caprichio, *Sir Humourous*, hee cometh to me to be cured. I counsel marriage with his Mistresse, according to Hippocrates his method, together with milk diet, herbs, aloes, and wild parsley, good in such cases, though Avicenna preferreth some sort of wild fowl, teals, widgeons, becca ficos, which men in Sussex eat. He flies out in a passion, ho! ho; and falls to calling me names, dizzard, ass, lunatic, moper, Bedlamite, pseudo-Democritus. I smile in his face, bidding him be patient, tranquil, to no purpose, he still rages, I think this man must fetch his remedies from Utopia, Fairy Land, Islands in the Moone, &c.

### EXTRACT II.

* * * Much disputacyons of fierce wits amongst themselves, in logomachies, subtle controversies, many dry blows given on either side, contentions of

learned men, or such as would be so thought, as *Bodinus de Periodis* saith of such an one, *arrident amici ridet mundus*, in English, this man his cronies they cocker him up, they flatter him, he would fayne appear somebody, meanwhile the world thinks him no better than a dizzard, a ninny, a sophist * * * * * * Philosophy running mad, madness philosophizing, much idle-learned inquiries, what Truth is? and no issue, fruit, of all these noises, only huge books are written, and who is the wiser? * * * * Men sitting in the Doctor's chairs, we marvel how they got there, being *homines intellectus pulverulenti*, as *Trincauellius* notes; they care not so they may raise a dust to smother the eyes of their oppugners; *homines parvullissimi* as *Lemnius*, whom *Alcuin* herein taxeth of a crude Latinism; dwarfs, minims, the least little men, these spend their time, and 'tis odds but they lose their time and wits too into the bargain, chacing of nimble and retiring Truth: Her they prosecute, her still they worship, *libant*, they make libations, spilling the wine, as those old Romans in their sacrificials, *Cerealia, May-games:* Truth is the game all these hunt after, to the extreme perturbacyon and drying up of the moistures, *humidum radicale exsiccant*, as *Galen*, in his counsels to one of these wear-wits, brain-moppers, spunges, saith. *** and for all this *nunquam metam attingunt*, and how should they? they bowle awry, shooting beside the marke; whereas it should appear, that *Truth absolute* on this planet of ours, is scarcely to be found, but in her stede *Queene opinion* predominates, governs, whose shifting and ever mutable *Lampas*, me seemeth, is man's destinie to follow, she præcurseth, she guideth him, before his uncapable eyes she frisketh her tender lights, which entertayne the child-man, untill what time his sight be strong to endure the vision of *Very Truth*, which is in the heavens, the vision which is beatifical, as *Anianus* expounds in his argument against certain mad wits which helde God to be corporeous; these were dizzards, fools, *gothamites*. *** but and if *Very Truth* be extant indeede on earth, as some hold she it is which actuates men's deeds, purposes, ye may in vaine look for her in the learned universities, halls, colleges. Truth is no Doctoresse, she taketh no degrees at Paris or Oxford, amongst great clerks, disputants, subtile Aristotles, men *nodosi ingenii, able to take Lully by the chin*, but oftentimes to such an one as myself an *Idiota* or common person, *no great things*, melancholizing in woods where waters are, quiet places by rivers, fountains, whereas the silly man expecting no such matter, thinketh only how best to delectate and refresh his mynde continually with *Natura* her pleasant scenes, woods, waterfalls, or *Art* her statelier gardens, parks, terraces, *Belvideres*, on a sudden the goddesse herself *Truth* has appeared, with a shyning lyghte and a sparklyng countenance, so as yee may not be able lightly to resist her. * * * *

### EXTRACT IV.

This morning, May 2, 1602, having first broken my fast upon eggs ano cooling salades, mellows, water-cresses, those herbes, according to *Villanovus* his prescription, who disallows the use of meat in a morning as gross, fat, hebetant, *ferall*, altogether fitter for wild beasts than men, *e contra* commendeth this herb-diete for gentle, humane, active, conducing to contemplation in most men, I betook myselfe to the nearest fields. (Being in London I commonly dwell in the *suburbes*, as airiest, quietest, *loci musis propriores*, free from noises of caroches, waggons, mechanick and base workes, workshoppes, also sights, pageants, spectacles of outlandish birds, fishes, crocodiles, *Indians*, mermaids, adde quarrels, fightings, wranglings of the mobbe, *plebs*, the rabble, duellos with fists, *proper to this island*, at which the stiletto'd and secrete *Italian* laughs :) withdrawing myselfe from these buzzing and illiterate vanities, with a *bezo las manos* to the citty, I begin to inhale, draw in, snuff up, as horses *dila-*

*tis naribus* snort the fresh aires, with exceeding great delight, when suddenly there crosses me a procession sad, heavy, dolorous, tristfull, melancholick, able to change mirth into dolour, and overcast a clearer atmosphere than possibly the neighbourhoods of so great a city can afford. An old man, a poore man, deceased, is borne on men's shoulders to a poore buriall, without solemnities of hearse, mourners, plumes, *mutæ personæ, those personate actors that will weep if yee shew them a piece of silver;* none of those customed civilities of children, kinsfolk, *dependants*, following the coffin; he died a poore man, his friends *assessores opum, those cronies of his that stuck by him so long as he had a penny*, now leave him, forsake him, shun him, desert him: they think it much to follow his putrid and stinking carcase to the grave; his children, if he had any, for commonly the case stands thus, this poore man his son dies before him, he survives poore, indigent, base, dejected, miserable, &c., or if he have any which survive him, *sua negotia agunt*, they mind their own business, forsooth, cannot, will not, find time, leisure, *inclination, extremum munus perficere*, to follow to the pit their old indulgent father, which loved them, stroked them, caressed them, cockering them up, *quantum potuit*, as farre as his means extended, while they were babes, chits, *minims*, hee may rot in his grave, lie stinking in the sun, *for them*, have no buriall at all, they care not. *O nefas!* Chiefly I noted the coffin to have been, *without a pall*, nothing but a few planks of cheapest wood that could be had, *naked*, having none of the ordinary *symptomata* of a funerall, those *locularii* which bare the body, having on diversely, coloured coats, *and none black;* (one of these reported the deceased to have been an almsman seven yeares, a pauper, harboured and fed in the workhouse of St. Giles in the fields, to whose proper burying ground he was now going for interment). All which when I behelde, hardly I refrained from weeping, and incontinently I fell to musing: "If this man had been rich, a *Crœsus, a Crassus, or as rich as Whittington*, what pompe, charge, lavish cost, expenditure of rich buriall, *ceremoniall-obsequies, obsequious ceremonies*, had been thought too good for such an one; what store of panegyricks, elogies, funerall orations, &c., some beggarly poetaster, worthy to be beaten for his ill rimes, crying him up, hee was rich, generous, bountiful, polite, learned, *a Mæcenas*, while as in very deede he was nothing lesse: what weeping sighing, sorrowing, honing, complaining, kinsmen, friends, relatives, fourtieth cousins, poor relatives, lamenting for the deceased; hypocriticall heirs, sobbing striking their breasts, (they care not if he had died a year ago; so many clients dependants, flatterers, *parasites, cunning Gnathoes*, tramping on foot after the hearse, all their care is, who shall stand fairest with the successour; he meantime (like enough) spurns them from him, spits at them, treads them under his foot, will have nought to do with any such cattle. I think him in the right: *Hæc sunt majora gravitate Heracliti. These follies are enough to give crying Heraclitus a fit of the spleene.* The fruit, issue, *children*, of these my morning meditations, have been certain crude, impolite, incomposite, *hirsute*, (what shall I say?) *verses*, noting the difference of *rich* and *poor*, in the ways of a rich noble's palace and a poor workhouse.

*Sequuntur.*

THE ARGUMENT.

*In a costly palace Youth meets respect;*
*In a wretched workhouse Age finds neglect*

# Recollections of Christ's Hospital.

To comfort the desponding parent with the thought that, without diminishing the stock which is imperiously demanded to furnish the more pressing and homely wants of our nature, he has disposed of one or more perhaps out of a numerous offspring, under the shelter of a care scarce less tender than the paternal, where not only their bodily cravings shall be supplied, but that mental *pabulum* is also dispensed, which HE hath declared to be no less necessary to our sustenance, who said, that "not by bread alone man can live;" for this Christ's Hospital unfolds her bounty. Here neither, on the one hand, are the youth lifted up above their family, which we must suppose liberal though reduced; nor, on the other hand, are they liable to be depressed below its level by the mean habits and sentiments which a common charity-school generates. It is, in a word, an Institution to keep those who have yet held up their heads in the world from sinking; to keep alive the spirit of a decent household, when poverty was in danger of crushing it; to assist those who are the most willing, but not always the most able, to assist themselves; to separate a child from his family for a season, in order to render him back hereafter, with feelings and habits more congenial to it, than he could even have attained by remaining at home in the bosom of it. It is a preserving and renovating principle, an antidote for the *res angusta domi*, when it presses, as it always does, most heavily upon the most ingenuous nature.

This is Christ's Hospital; and whether its character would be improved by confining its advantages to the very lowest of the people, let those judge who have witnessed the looks, the gestures, the behaviour, the manner of their play with one another, their deportment towards strangers, the whole aspect and physiognomy of that vast assemblage of boys on the London foundation, who freshen and make alive again with their sports the else mouldering cloisters of the old Grey Friars—which strangers who have never witnessed, if they pass through Newgate Street, or by Smithfield, would do well to go a little out of their way to see.

For the Christ's Hospital boy feels that he is no charity-boy; he feels it in the antiquity and regality of the foundation to which he belongs; in the usage which he meets with at school, and the treatment he is accustomed to out of its bounds; in the respect, and even kindness, which his well-known garb never fails to procure him in the streets of the metropolis; he feels it in his education, in that measure of classical attainments, which every individual at that school, though not destined to a learned profession, has it in his power to procure, attainments which it would be worse than folly to put it in the reach of the labouring classes to acquire: he feels it in the numberless comforts, and even magnificences, which surround him; in his old and awful cloisters, with their traditions; in his spacious school-rooms, and in the well-ordered, airy, and lofty rooms where he sleeps; in his stately dining-hall, hung round with pictures, by Verrio, Lely, and others, one of them surpassing in size and grandeur almost any other in the kingdom;* above all, in the very extent and magnitude of the body to which he belongs, and the consequent spirit, the intelligence, and public conscience, which is the result of so many various yet wonderfully combining members. Compared with this last-named advantage,

* By Verrio, representing James the Second on his throne, surrounded by his courtiers (all curious portraits), receiving the mathematical pupils at their annual presentation, a custom still kept up on New Year's-day at Court.

what is the stock of information (I do not here speak of book-learning, but of that knowledge which boy receives from boy), the mass of collected opinions, the intelligence in common, among the few and narrow members of an ordinary boarding-school.

The Christ's Hospital or Blue-coat boy, has a distinctive character of his own, as far removed from the abject qualities of a common charity-boy as it is from the disgusting forwardness of a lad brought up at some other of the public schools. There is *pride* in it, accumulated from the circumstances which I have described as differencing him from the former; and there is a *restraining modesty*, from a sense of obligation and dependence, which must ever keep his deportment from assimilating to that of the latter. His very garb, as it is antique and venerable, feeds his self-respect; as it is a badge of dependence, it restrains the natural petulance of that age from breaking out into overt acts of insolence. This produces silence and a reserve before strangers, yet not that cowardly shyness which boys mewed up at home will feel; he will speak up when spoken to, but the stranger must begin the conversation with him. Within his bounds he is all fire and play; but in the streets he steals along with all the self-concentration of a young monk. He is never known to mix with other boys, they are a sort of laity to him. All this proceeds, I have no doubt, from the continual consciousness which he carries about him of the difference of his dress from that of the rest of the world; with a modest jealousy over himself, lest, by over-hastily mixing with common and secular playfellows, he should commit the dignity of his cloth. Nor let any one laugh at this; for, considering the propensity of the multitude, and especially of the small multitude, to ridicule anything unusual in dress—above all, where such peculiarity may be construed by malice into a mark of disparagement—this reserve will appear to be nothing more than a wise instinct in the Blue-coat boy. That it is neither pride nor rusticity, at least that it has none of the offensive qualities of either, a stranger may soon satisfy himself by putting a question to any of these boys: he may be sure of an answer couched in terms of plain civility, neither loquacious nor embarrassed. Let him put the same question to a parish-boy, or to one of the trencher-caps in the —— cloisters, and the impudent reply of the one shall not fail to exasperate any more than the certain servility, and mercenary eye to reward, which he will meet with in the other, can fail to depress and sadden him.

The Christ's Hospital boy is a religious character. His school is eminently a religious foundation; it has its peculiar prayers, its services at set times, its graces, hymns, and anthems, following each other in an almost monastic closeness of succession. This religious character in him is not always untinged with superstition. That is not wonderful, when we consider the thousand tales and traditions which must circulate with undisturbed credulity, amongst so many boys, that have so few checks to their belief from any intercourse with the world at large; upon whom their equals in age must work so much, their elders so little. With this leaning towards an over-belief in matters of religion, which will soon correct itself when he comes out into society, may be classed a turn for romance above most other boys. This is to be traced in the same manner to their excess of society with each other, and defect of mingling with the world. Hence the peculiar avidity with such books as the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and others of a still wilder cast, are, or at least were in my time, sought for by the boys. I remember when some half-dozen of them set off from school, without map, card, or compass, on a serious expedition to find out *Philip Quarl's Island.*

The Christ's Hospital boy's sense of right and wrong is peculiarly tender and apprehensive. It is even apt to run out into ceremonial observances, and to impose a yoke upon itself beyond the strict obligations of the moral law. Those who were contemporaries with me at that School thirty years ago, will remember

with what more than Judaic rigour the eating of the fat of certain boiled meats* was interdicted. A boy would have blushed, as at the exposure of some heinous immorality, to have been detected eating that forbidden portion of his allowance of animal food, the whole of which, while he was in health, was little more than sufficient to allay his hunger. The same, or even greater, refinement was shown in the rejection of certain kinds of sweet-cake. What gave rise to these supererogatory penances, these self-denying ordinances, I could never learn;† they certainly argue no defect of the conscientious principle. A little excess in that article is not undesirable in youth, to make allowance for the inevitable waste which comes in maturer years. But in the less ambiguous line of duty, in those directions of the moral feelings which cannot be mistaken or depreciated, I will relate what took place in the year 1785, when Mr. Perry, the steward, died. I must be pardoned for taking my instances from my own times. Indeed the vividness of my recollections, while I am upon this subject, almost brings back those times; they are present to me still. But I believe that in the years which have elapsed since the period which I speak of, the character of the Christ's Hospital boy is very little changed. Their situation in point of many comforts is improved; but that which I ventured before to term the *public conscience* of the school, the pervading moral sense, of which every mind partakes, and to which so many individual minds contribute, remains, I believe, pretty much the same as when I left it. I have seen within this twelvemonth almost the change which has been produced upon a boy of eight or nine years of age, upon being admitted into that school; how, from a pert young coxcomb, who thought that all knowledge was comprehended within his shallow brains, because a smattering of two or three languages and one or two sciences were stuffed into him by injudicious treatment at home, by a mixture with the wholesome society of so many schoolfellows, in less time than I have spoken of, he has sunk to his own level, and is contented to be carried on in the quiet orb of modest self-knowledge in which the common mass of that unpresumptuous assemblage of boys seem to move; from being a little unfeeling mortal, he has got to feel and reflect. Nor would it be a difficult matter to show how, at a school like this, where the boy is neither entirely separated from home, nor yet exclusively under its influence, the best feelings, the filial for instance, are brought to a maturity which they could not have attained under a completely domestic education; how the relation of parent is rendered less tender by unremitted association, and the very awfulness of age is best apprehended by some sojourning amidst the comparative levity of youth; how absence, not drawn out by too great extension into alienation or forgetfulness, puts an edge upon the relish of occasional intercourse, and the boy is made the better *child* by that which keeps the force of that relation from being felt as perpetually pressing on him; how the substituted paternity, into the care of which he is adopted, while in everything substantial it makes up for the natural, in the necessary omission of individual fondness and partialities, directs the mind only the more strongly to appreciate that natural and first tie, in which such weaknesses are the bond of strength, and the appetite which craves after them betrays no perverse palate. But these speculations rather belong to the question of the comparative advantage of a public over a private education in general. I must get back to my favourite school; and to that which took place when our old and good steward died.

* Under the denomination of *gags*.

† I am told that the late steward, Mr. Hathaway, who evinced on many occasions a most praiseworthy anxiety to promote the comfort of the boys, had occasion for all his address and perseverance to eradicate the first of these unfortunate prejudices, in which he at length happily succeeded, and thereby restored to one-half of the animal nutrition of the school those honours which painful superstition and blind zeal had so long conspired to withhold from it.

And I will say, that when I think of the frequent instances which I have met with in children, of a hard-heartedness, a callousness, and insensibility to the loss of relations, even of those who have begot and nourished them, I cannot but consider it as a proof of something in the peculiar conformation of that school, favourable to the expansion of the best feelings of our nature, that, at the period which I am noticing, out of five hundred boys there was not a dry eye to be found among them, nor a heart that did not beat with genuine emotion. Every impulse to play, until the funeral day was past, seemed suspended throughout the school; and the boys, lately so mirthful and sprightly, were seen pacing their cloisters alone, or in sad groups standing about, few of them without some token, such as their slender means could provide, a black riband or something to denote respect and a sense of their loss. The time itself was a time of anarchy, a time in which all authority (out of school-hours) was abandoned. The ordinary restraints were for those days superseded; and the gates, which at other times kept us in, were left without watchers. Yet, with the exception of one or two graceless boys at most, who took advantage of that suspension of authorities to *skulk out*, as it was called, the whole body of that great school kept rigorously within their bounds, by a voluntary self-imprisonment; and they who broke bounds, though they escaped punishment from any master, fell into a general disrepute among us, and, for that which at any other time would have been applauded and admired as a mark of spirit, were consigned to infamy and reprobation: so much *natural government* have gratitude and the principles of reverence and love, and so much did a respect to their dead friend prevail with these Christ's Hospital boys above any fear which his presence among them when living could ever produce. And if the impressions which were made on my mind so long ago are to be trusted, very richly did their steward deserve this tribute. It is a pleasure to me even now to call to mind his portly form, the regal awe which he always contrived to inspire, in spite of a tenderness and even weakness of nature that would have enfeebled the reins of discipline in any other master; a yearning of tenderness towards those under his protection, which could make five hundred boys at once feel towards him each as to their individual father. He had faults, with which we had nothing to do; but, with all his faults, indeed, Mr. Perry was a most extraordinary creature. Contemporary with him, and still living, though he has long since resigned his occupation, will it be impertinent to mention the name of our excellent upper grammar-master, the Rev. James Boyer? He was a disciplinarian, indeed, of a different stamp from him whom I have just described; but now the terrors of the rod, and of a temper a little too hasty to leave the more nervous of us quite at our ease to do justice to his merits in those days, are long since over, ungrateful were we if we should refuse our testimony to that unwearied assiduity with which he attended to the particular improvement of each of us. Had we been the offspring of the first gentry in the land, he could not have been instigated by the strongest views of recompense and reward to have made himself a greater slave to the most laborious of all occupations than he did for us sons of charity, from whom, or from our parents, he could expect nothing. He has had his reward in the satisfaction of having discharged his duty, in the pleasurable consciousness of having advanced the respectability of that institution to which, both man and boy, he was attached; in the honours to which so many of his pupils have successfully aspired at both our Universities; and in the staff with which the Governors of the Hospital at the close of his hard labours with the highest expressions of the obligations the school lay under to him, unanimously voted to present him.

I have often considered it among the felicities of the constitution of this school, that the offices of steward and schoolmaster are kept distinct; the strict business of education alone devolving upon the latter, while the former has the charge of all things out of school, the control of the provisions, the regulation

of meals, of dress, of play, and the ordinary intercourse of the boys. By this divilsion of management, a superior respectability must attach to the teacher whiae his office is unmixed with any of these lower concerns. A still greater adv ntage over the construction of common boarding-schools is to be found in the settled salaries of the masters, rendering them totally free of obligation to any individual pupil or his parents. This never fails to have its effect at schools where each boy can reckon up to a hair what profit the master derives from him, where he views him every day in the light of a caterer, a provider for the family, who is to get so much by him in each of his meals. Boys will see and consider these things; and how much must the sacred character of preceptor suffer in their minds by these degrading associations! The very bill which the pupil carries home with him at Christmas, eked out, perhaps, with elaborate though necessary minuteness, instructs him that his teachers have other ends than the mere love to learning in the lessons which they give him; and though they put into his hands the fine sayings of Seneca or Epictetus, yet they themselves are none of those disinterested pedagogues to teach philosophy *gratis.* The master, too, is sensible that he is seen in this light; and how much this must lessen that affectionate regard to the learners which alone can sweeten the bitter labour of instruction, and convert the whole business into unwelcome and uninteresting task-work, many preceptors that I have conversed with on the subject are ready, with a sad heart, to acknowledge. From this inconvenience the settled salaries of the masters of this school in great measure exempt them; while the happy custom of choosing masters (indeed every officer of the establishment) from those who have received their education there, gives them an interest in advancing the character of the school, and binds them to observe a tenderness and a respect to the children, in which a stranger, feeling that independence which I have spoken of might well be expected to fail.

In affectionate recollection of the place where he was bred up, in hearty recognitions of old schoolfellows met with again after the lapse of years, or in foreign countries, the Christ's Hospital boy yields to none; I might almost say he goes beyond most other boys. The very compass and magnitude of the school, its thousand bearings, the space it takes up in the imagination beyond the ordinary schools, impresses a remembrance, accompanied with an elevation of mind, that attends him through life. It is too big, too affecting an object, to pass away quickly from his mind. The Christ's Hospital boys' friends at school are commonly his intimates through life. For me, I do not know whether a constitutional imbecility does not incline me too obstinately to cling to the remembrances of childhood; in an inverted ratio to the usual sentiments of mankind, nothing that I have been engaged in since seems of any value or importance, compared to the colours which imagination gave to everything then. I belong to no *body corporate* such as I then made a part of.—And here before I close, taking leave of the general reader, and addressing myself solely to my old schoolfellows, that were contemporaries with me from the year 1782 to 1789, let me have leave to remember some of those circumstances of our school, which they will not be unwilling to have brought back to their minds.

And first, let us remember, as first in importance in our childish eyes, the young men (as they almost were) who, under the denomination of *Grecians*, were waiting the expiration of the period when they should be sent, at the charges of the Hospital, to one or other of our Universities, but more frequently to Cambridge. These youths, from their superior acquirements, their superior age and stature, and the fewness of their numbers (for seldom above two or three at a time were inaugurated into that high order), drew the eyes of all, and especially of the younger boys, into a reverent observance and admiration. How tall they used to seem to us!—how stately would they pace along the cloisters!—while the play of the lesser boys was absolutely suspended, or its boisterousness at least allayed, at their presence! Not that they ever beat

or struck the boys—that would have been to have demeaned themselves—the dignity of their persons alone insured them all respect. The task of blows, of corporal chastisement, they left to the common monitors, or heads of wards, who it must be confessed, in our time had rather too much licence allowed them to oppress and misuse their inferiors; and the interference of the Grecian, who may be considered as the spiritual power, was not unfrequently called for, to mitigate by its mediation, the heavy unrelenting arm of this temporal power, or monitor. In fine, the Grecians were the solemn Muftis of the school. Æras were computed from their time;—it used to be said, such or such a thing was done when S—— or T—— was Grecian.

As I ventured to call the Grecians the Muftis of the school, the king's boys,* as their character then was, may well pass for the Janissaries. They were the terror of all the other boys; bred up under that hardy sailor, as well as excellent mathematician, and co-navigator with Captain Cook, William Wales. All his systems were adapted to fit them for the rough element which they were destined to encounter. Frequent and severe punishments, which were expected to be borne with more than Spartan fortitude, came to be considered less as inflictions of disgrace than as trials of obstinate endurance. To make his boys hardy, and to give them early sailor habits, seemed to be his only aim; to this everything was subordinate. Moral obliquities, indeed, were sure of receiving their full recompense, for no occasion of laying on the lash was ever let slip; but the effects expected to be produced from it were something very different from contrition or mortification. There was in William Wales a perpetual fund of humour, a constant glee about him, which, heightened by an inveterate provincialism of North-country dialect, absolutely took away the sting from his severities. His punishments were a game at patience, in which the master was not always worst contented when he found himself at times overcome by his pupil. What success this discipline had, or how the effects of it operated upon the after-lives of these king's boys, I cannot say: but I am sure that, for the time, they were absolute nuisances to the rest of the school. Hardy, brutal, and often wicked, they were the most graceless lump in the whole mass: older and bigger than the other boys (for, by the system of their education they were kept longer at school by two or three years than any of the rest, except the Grecians), they were a constant terror to the younger part of the school; and some who may read this, I doubt not, will remember the consternation into which the juvenile fry of us were thrown, when the cry was raised in the cloisters, that *the First Order was coming*—for so they termed the first form or class of those boys. Still these sea-boys answered some good purposes in the school. They were the military class among the boys, foremost in athletic exercises, who extended the fame of the prowess of the school far and near: and the apprentices in the vicinage, and sometimes the butchers' boys in the neighbouring market, had sad occasion to attest their valour.

The time would fail me if I were to attempt to enumerate all those circumstances, some pleasant, some attended with some pain, which seen through the mist of distance, come sweetly softened to the memory. But I must crave leave to remember our transcending superiority in those invigorating sports, leap-frog, and basting the bear; our delightful excursions in the summer holidays to the New River, near Newington, where, like otters, we would live the long day in the water, never caring for dressing ourselves when we had once stripped; our savoury meals afterwards, when we came home almost famished with staying out all day without our dinners; our visits at other times to the Tower, where, by ancient privilege, we had free access to all the curiosities; our solemn processions through the City at Easter, with the Lord Mayor's largess of buns, wine, and a shilling, with the festive questions and civic pleasantries of the dispensing Aldermen, which were more to us than all the rest of the banquet; our

* The mathematical pupils, bred up to the sea, on the foundation of Charles the Second.

stately suppings in public, where the well-lighted hall, and the confluence of well-dressed company who came to see us, made the whole look more like a concert or assembly, than a scene of a plain bread and cheese collation; the annual orations upon St. Matthew's day, in which the senior scholar, before he had done, seldom failed to reckon up, among those who had done honour to our school by being educated in it, the names of those accomplished critics and Greek scholars, Joshua Barnes and Jeremiah Markland (I marvel they left out Camden while they were about it). Let me have leave to remember our hymns and anthems, and well-toned organ; the doleful tune of the burial anthem chanted in the solemn cloisters, upon the seldom-occurring funeral of some schoolfellow; the festivities at Christmas, when the richest of us would club our stock to have a gaudy day, sitting round the fire, replenished to the height with logs, and the penniless, and he that could contribute nothing, partook in all the mirth, and in some of the substantialities of the feasting; the carol sung by night at that time of the year, which, when a young boy, I have so often lain awake to hear from seven (the hour of going to bed) till ten, when it was sung by the older boys and monitors, and have listened to it, in their rude chanting, till I have been transported in fancy to the fields of Bethlehem, and the song which was sung at that season by angels' voices to the shepherds.

Nor would I willingly forget any of those things which administered to our vanity. The hem-stitched bands, and town-made shirts, which some of the most fashionable among us wore; the town-girdles, with buckles of silver, or shining stone; the badges of the sea-boys; the cots, or superior shoe-strings of the monitors; the medals of the markers (those who were appointed to hear the Bible read in the wards on Sunday morning and evening), which bore on their obverse in silver, as certain parts of our garments carried in meaner metal, the countenance of our Founder, that godly and royal child, King Edward the Sixth, the flower of the Tudor name—the young flower that was untimely cropped as it began to fill our land with its early odours—the boy-patron of boys—the serious and holy child who walked with Cranmer and Ridley—fit associate, in those tender years, for the bishops and future martyrs of our Church, to receive, or (as occasion sometimes proved) to give instruction.

# On the Tragedies of Shakspere,

## CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR FITNESS FOR STAGE REPRESENTATION.

(*The Reflector*, No. IV., art. ix., 1811.)

[The original title of this masterly paper, on its first publication in Leigh Hunt's Reflector, was "Theatralia, No. I., On Garrick and Acting." It was then signed with the letter "X"—affording the reader no clue whatever as to the authorship.]

TAKING a turn the other day in the Abbey, I was struck with the affected attitude of a figure, which I do not remember to have seen before, and which upon examination proved to be a whole-length of the celebrated Mr. Garrick. Though I would not go so far with some good Catholics abroad as to shut

players altogether out of consecrated ground, yet I own I was not a little scandalized at the introduction of theatrical airs and gestures into a place set apart to remind us of the saddest realities. Going nearer, I found inscribed under this harlequin figure the following lines :—

> To paint fair Nature, by divine command,
> Her magic pencil in his glowing hand,
> A Shakspere rose : then, to expand his fame
> Wide o'er this breathing world, a Garrick came.
> Though sunk in death the forms the Poet drew,
> The Actor's genius made them breathe anew ;
> Though, like the bard himself, in night they lay,
> Immortal Garrick call'd them back to-day :
> And till Eternity with power sublime
> Shall mark the mortal hour of hoary Time,
> Shakspere and Garrick like twin-stars shall shine,
> And earth irradiate with a beam divine.

It would be an insult to my readers' understandings to attempt anything like a criticism on this farrago of false thoughts and nonsense. But the reflection it led me into was a kind of wonder, how from the days of the actor here celebrated to our own, it should have been the fashion to compliment every performer in his turn, that has had the luck to please the town in any of the great characters of Shakspere, with a notion of possessing a *mind congenial with the poet's;* how people should come thus unaccountably to confound the power of originating poetical images and conceptions with the faculty of being able to read or recite the same when put into words ;* or what connection that absolute mastery over the heart and soul of man, which a great dramatic poet possesses, has with those low tricks upon the eye and ear, which a player by observing a few general effects, which some common passion, as grief, anger, &c., usually has upon the gestures and exterior, can easily compass. To know the internal workings and movements of a great mind, of an Othello or a Hamlet, for instance, the *when* and the *why* and the *how far* they should be moved; to what pitch a passion is becoming; to give the reins and to pull in the curb exactly at the moment when the drawing in or the slacking is most graceful ; seems to demand a reach of intellect of a vastly different extent from that which is employed upon the bare imitation of the signs of these passions in the countenance or gesture, which signs are usually observed to be most lively and emphatic in the weaker sort of minds, and which signs can after all but indicate some passion, as I said before, anger, or grief, generally; but of the motives and grounds of the passion, wherein it differs from the same passion in low and vulgar natures, of these the actor can give no more idea by his face or gesture than the eye (without a metaphor) can speak, or the muscles utter intelligible sounds. But such is the instantaneous nature of the impressions which we take in at the eye and ear at a playhouse, compared with the slow apprehension oftentimes of the understanding in reading, that we are apt not only to sink the play-writer in the consideration which we pay to the actor, but even to identify in our minds in a perverse manner, the actor with the character which he represents. It is difficult for a frequent play-goer to disembarrass the idea of Hamlet from the person and voice of Mr. K. We speak of Lady Macbeth, while we are in reality thinking of Mrs. S. Nor is this confusion incidental alone to unlettered persons, who, not possessing the advantage

* It is observable that we fall into this confusion only in *dramatic* recitations. We never dream that the gentleman who reads Lucretius in public with great applause, is therefore a great poet and philosopher ; nor do we find that Tom Davies, the bookseller, who is recorded to have recited the Paradise Lost better than any man in England in his day (though I cannot help thinking there must be some mistake in this tradition) was therefore, by his intimate friends, set upon a level with Milton.

of reading, are necessarily dependent upon the stage-player for all the pleasure which they can receive from the drama, and to whom the very idea of *what an author is* cannot be made comprehensible without some pain and perplexity of mind : the error is one from which persons otherwise not meanly lettered, find it almost impossible to extricate themselves.

Never let me be so ungrateful as to forget the very high degree of satisfaction which I received some years back from seeing for the first time a tragedy of Shakspere performed, in which these two great performers sustained the principal parts. It seemed to embody and realize conceptions which had hitherto assumed no distinct shape. But dearly do we pay all our life afterwards for this juvenile pleasure, this sense of distinctness. When the novelty is past, we find to our cost that, instead of realizing an idea, we have only materialized and brought down a fine vision to the standard of flesh and blood. We have let go a dream, in quest of an unattainable substance.

How cruelly this operates upon the mind, to have its free conceptions thus cramped and pressed down to the measure of a strait-lacing actuality, may be judged from that delightful sensation of freshness, with which we turn to those plays of Shakspere which have escaped being performed, and to those passages in the acting plays of the same writer which have happily been left out in the performance. How far the very custom of hearing anything *spouted*, withers and blows upon a fine passage, may be seen in those speeches from *Henry the Fifth*, &c., which are current in the mouths of school-boys from their being to be found in *Enfield Speakers*, and such kind of books. I confess myself utterly unable to appreciate that celebrated soliloquy in *Hamlet*, beginning "To be or not to be," or to tell whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, it has been so handled and pawed about by declamatory boys and men, and torn so inhumanly from its living place and principle of continuity in the play, till it is become to me a perfect dead member.

It may seem a paradox, but I cannot help being of opinion that the plays of Shakspere are less calculated for performance on a stage than those of almost any other dramatist whatever. Their distinguished excellence is a reason that they should be so. There is so much in them, which comes not under the province of acting, with which eye, and tone, and gesture, have nothing to do.

The glory of the scenic art is to personate passion, and the turns of passion; and the more coarse and palpable the passion is, the more hold upon the eyes and ears of the spectators the performer obviously possesses. For this reason, scolding scenes, scenes where two persons talk themselves into a fit of fury, and then in a surprising manner talk themselves out of it again, have always been the most popular upon our stage. And the reason is plain, because the spectators are here most palpably appealed to, they are the proper judges in this war of words, they are the legitimate ring that should be formed round such "intellectual prize-fighters." Talking is the direct object of the imitation here. But in the best dramas, and in Shakspere above all, how obvious it is, that the form of *speaking*, whether it be in soliloquy or dialogue, is only a medium, and often a highly artificial one, for putting the reader or spectator into possession of that knowledge of the inner structure and workings of mind in a character, which he could otherwise never have arrived at *in that form of composition* by any gift short of intuition. We do here as we do with novels written in the *epistolary form*. How many improprieties, perfect solecisms in letter-writing, do we put up with in "Clarissa" and other books, for the sake of the delight which that form upon the whole gives us.

But the practice of stage representation reduces everything to a controversy of elocution. Every character, from the boisterous blasphemings of Bajazet to the shrinking timidity of womanhood, must play the orator. The love-dialogues of *Romeo and Juliet*, those silver-sweet sounds of lovers' tongues by night; the more intimate and sacred sweetness of nuptial colloquy between an

Othello or a Posthumus with their married wives, all those delicacies which are so delightful in the reading, as when we read of those youthful dalliances in Paradise—

> As beseem'd
> Fair couple link'd in happy nuptial league,
> Alone :

by the inherent fault of stage representation, how are these things sullied and turned from their very nature by being exposed to a large assembly; when such speeches as Imogen addresses to her lord, come drawling out of the mouth of a hired actress, whose courtship, though nominally addressed to the personated Posthumus, is manifestly aimed at the spectators, who are to judge of her endearments and her returns of love.

The character of Hamlet is perhaps that by which, since the days of Betterton, a succession of popular performers have had the greatest ambition to distinguish themselves. The length of the part may be one of their reasons. But for the character itself, we find it in a play, and therefore we judge it a fit subject of dramatic representation. The play itself abounds in maxims and reflections beyond any other, and therefore we consider it as a proper vehicle for conveying moral instruction. But Hamlet himself—what does he suffer meanwhile by being dragged forth as a public schoolmaster, to give lectures to the crowd! Why, nine parts in ten of what Hamlet does, are transactions between himself and his moral sense, they are the effusions of his solitary musings, which he retires to holes and corners and the most sequestered parts of the palace to pour forth ; or rather, they are the silent meditations with which his bosom is bursting, reduced to *words* for the sake of the reader, who must else remain ignorant of what is passing there. These profound sorrows, these light-and-noise-abhorring ruminations, which the tongue scarce dares utter to deaf walls and chambers, how can they be represented by a gesticulating actor, who comes and mouths them out before an audience, making four hundred people his confidants at once? I say not that it is the fault of the actor so to do ; he must pronounce them *ore rotundo*, he must accompany them with his eye, he must insinuate them into his auditory by some trick of eye, tone, or gesture, or he fails. *He must be thinking all the while of his appearance, because he knows that all the while the spectators are judging of it.* And this is the way to represent the shy, negligent, retiring Hamlet.

It is true that there is no other mode of conveying a vast quantity of thought and feeling to a great portion of the audience, who otherwise would never learn it for themselves by reading, and the intellectual acquisition gained this way may, for aught I know, be inestimable; but I am not arguing that *Hamlet* should not be acted, but how much *Hamlet* is made another thing by being acted. I have heard much of the wonders which Garrick performed in this part; but as I never saw him, I must have leave to doubt whether the representation of such a character came within the province of his art. Those who tell me of him, speak of his eye, of the magic of his eye, and of his commanding voice : physical properties, vastly desirable in an actor, and without which he can never insinuate meaning into an auditory,—but what have they to do with Hamlet? what have they to do with intellect? In fact, the things aimed at in theatrical representation, are to arrest the spectator's eye upon the form and the gesture, and so to gain a more favourable hearing to what is spoken : it is not what the character is, but how he looks ; not what he says, but how he speaks it. I see no reason to think that if the play of Hamlet were written over again by some such writer as Banks or Lillo, retaining the process of the story, but totally omitting all the poetry of it, all the divine features of Shakspere, his stupendous intellect; and only taking care to give us enough of passionate dialogue, which Banks or Lillo were never at a loss to

furnish; I see not how the effect could be much different upon an audience, nor how the actor has it in his power to represent Shakspere to us differently from his representation of Banks or Lillo. Hamlet would still be a youthful accomplished prince, and must be gracefully personated; he might be puzzled in his mind, wavering in his conduct, seemingly cruel to Ophelia, he might see a ghost, and start at it, and address it kindly when he found it to be his father; all this in the poorest and most homely language of the servilest creeper after nature that ever consulted the palate of an audience; without troubling Shakspere for the matter: and I see not but there would be room for all the power which an actor has, to display itself. All the passions and changes of passion might remain; for those are much less difficult to write or act than is thought; it is a trick easy to be attained, it is but rising or falling a note or two in the voice, a whisper with a significant foreboding look to announce its approach, and so contagious the counterfeit appearance of any emotion is, that let the words be what they will, the look and tone shall carry it off and make it pass for deep skill in the passions.

It is common for people to talk of Shakspere's plays being *so natural,* that everybody can understand him. They are natural indeed, they are grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of the reach of most of us. You shall hear the same persons say that *George Barnwell* is very natural, and *Othello* is very natural, that they are both very deep; and to them they are the same kind of thing. At the one they sit and shed tears, because a good sort of young man is tempted by a naughty woman to commit *a trifling peccadillo,* the murder of an uncle or so,* that is all, and so comes to an untimely end, which is *so moving;* and at the other, because a blackamoor in a fit of jealousy kills his innocent white wife: and the odds are that ninety-nine out of a hundred would willingly behold the same catastrophe happen to both the heroes, and have thought the rope more due to Othello than to Barnwell. For of the texture of Othello's mind, the inward construction marvellously laid open with all its strengths and weaknesses, its heroic confidences and its human misgivings, its agonies of hate springing from the depths of love, they see no more than the spectators at a cheaper rate, who pay their pennies apiece to look through the man's telescope in Leicester Fields, see into the inward plot and topography of the moon. Some dim thing or other they see, they see an actor personating a passion, of grief, or anger, for instance, and they recognize it as a copy of the usual external effects of such passions; or at least as being true to *that symbol of the emotion which passes current at the theatre for it,* for it is often no more than that: but of the grounds of the passion, its correspondence to a great or heroic nature, which is the only worthy object of tragedy,—that common auditors know anything of this, or can have any such notions dinned into them by the mere strength of an actor's lungs,—that apprehensions foreign to them should be thus infused into them by storm, I can neither believe, nor understand how it can be possible.

We talk of Shakspere's admirable observation of life, when we should feel that not from a petty inquisition into those cheap and every-day characters which surrounded him, as they surround us, but from his own mind, which

* If this note could hope to meet the eye of any of the Managers, I would entreat and beg of them, in the name of both the galleries, that this insult upon the morality of the common people of London should cease to be eternally repeated in the holiday weeks. Why are the 'Prentices of this famous and well-governed city, instead of an amusement, to be treated over and over again with a nauseous sermon of George Barnwell? Why *at the end of their vistas* are we to place the *gallows?* Were I an uncle, I should not much like a nephew of mine to have such an example placed before his eyes. It is really making uncle-murder too trivial to exhibit it as done upon such slight motives;—it is attributing too much to such characters as Millwood; it is putting things into the heads of good young men, which they would never otherwise have dreamed of. Uncles that think anything of their lives, should fairly petition the Chamberlain against it.

was, to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's, the very "sphere of humanity," he fetched those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us recognizing a part, think we comprehend in our natures the whole; and oftentimes mistake the powers which he positively creates in us, for nothing more than indigenous faculties of our own minds, which only waited the application of corresponding virtues in him to return a full and clear echo of the same.

To return to Hamlet.—Among the distinguishing features of that wonderful character, one of the most interesting (yet painful) is that soreness of mind which makes him treat the intrusions of Polonius with harshness, and that asperity which he puts on in his interviews with Ophelia. These tokens of an unhinged mind (if they be not mixed in the latter case with a profound artifice of love, to alienate Ophelia by affected discourtesies, so to prepare her mind for the breaking off of that loving intercourse, which can no longer find a place amidst business so serious as that which he has to do) are parts of his character, which to reconcile with our admiration of Hamlet, the most patient consideration of his situation is no more than necessary; they are what we *forgive afterwards*, and explain by the whole of his character, but *at the time* they are harsh and unpleasant. Yet such is the actor's necessity of giving strong blows to the audience, that I have never seen a player in this character, who did not exaggerate and strain to the utmost these ambiguous features,—these temporary deformities in the character. They make him express a vulgar scorn at Polonius which utterly degrades his gentility, and which no explanation can render palatable; they make him show contempt, and curl up the nose at Ophelia's father,—contempt in its very grossest and most hateful form; but they get applause by it: it is natural, people say; that is, the words are scornful, and the actor expresses scorn, and that they can judge of: but why so much scorn, and of that sort, they never think of asking.

So to Ophelia.—All the Hamlets that I have ever seen, rant and rave at her as if she had committed some great crime, and the audience are highly pleased, because the words of the part are satirical, and they are enforced by the strongest expression of satirical indignation of which the face and voice are capable. But then, whether Hamlet is likely to have put on such brutal appearances to a lady whom he loved so dearly, is never thought on. The truth is, that in all such deep affections as had subsisted between Hamlet and Ophelia, there is a stock of *supererogatory love* (if I may venture to use the expression), which in any great grief of heart, especially where that which preys upon the mind cannot be communicated, confers a kind of indulgence upon the grieved party to express itself, even to its heart's dearest object, in the language of a temporary alienation; but it is not alienation, it is a distraction purely, and so it always makes itself to be felt by that object: it is not anger, but grief assuming the appearance of anger,—love awkwardly counterfeiting hate, as sweet countenances when they try to frown: but such sternness and fierce disgust as Hamlet is made to show, is no counterfeit, but the real face of absolute aversion,—of irreconcilable alienation. It may be said he puts on the madman; but then he should only so far put on this counterfeit lunacy as his own real distraction will give him leave; that is, incompletely, imperfectly; not in that confirmed, practised way, like a master of his art, or as Dame Quickly would say, "like one of those harlotry players."

I mean no disrespect to any actor, but the sort of pleasure which Shakspere's plays give in the acting seems to me not at all to differ from that which the audience receive from those of other writers; and, *they being in themselves essentially so different from all others*, I must conclude that there is something in the nature of acting which levels all distinctions. And in fact, who does not speak indifferently of the *Gamester* and of *Macbeth* as fine stage performances, and praise the Mrs. Beverley in the same way as the Lady Macbeth of Mrs. S.? Belvidera, and Calista, and Isabella, and Euphrasia, are they less liked

than Imogen, or than Juliet, or than Desdemona? Are they not spoken of and remembered in the same way? Is not the female performer as great (as they call it) in one as in the other? Did not Garrick shine, and was he not ambitious of shining in every drawling tragedy that his wretched day produced,—the productions of the Hills and the Murphys and the Browns,—and shall he have that honour to dwell in our minds for ever as an inseparable concomitant with Shakspere? A kindred mind! O who can read that affecting sonnet of Shakspere which alludes to his profession as a player :—

> Oh for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
> The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide
> Than public means which public manners breeds—
> Thence comes it that my name receives a brand;
> And almost thence my nature is subdued
> To what it works in, like the dyer's hand——

Or that other confession;—

> Alas! 'tis true, I have gone here and there,
> And made myself a motley to the view,
> Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear—

Who can read these instances of jealous self-watchfulness in our sweet Shakspere, and dream of any congeniality between him and one that, by every tradition of him, appears to have been as mere a player as ever existed; to have had his mind tainted with the lowest player's vices,—envy and jealousy, and miserable cravings after applause; one who in the exercise of his profession was jealous even of the women-performers that stood in his way; a manager full of managerial tricks and stratagems and finesse: that any resemblance should be dreamed of between him and Shakspere,—Shakspere who, in the plenitude and consciousness of his own powers, could with that noble modesty, which we can neither imitate nor appreciate, express himself thus of his own sense of his own defects :—

> Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
> Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd :
> Desiring *this man's art, and that man's scope.*

I am almost disposed to deny to Garrick the merits of being an admirer of Shakspere. A true lover of his excellencies he certainly was not; for would any true lover of them have admitted into his matchless scenes such ribald trash as Tate and Cibber, and the rest of them, that

> With their darkness durst affront his light,

have foisted into the acting plays of Shakspere? I believe it impossible that he could have had a proper reverence for Shakspere, and have condescended to go through that interpolated scene in *Richard the Third*, in which Richard tries to break his wife's heart by telling her he loves another woman, and says, "if she survives this she is immortal." Yet I doubt not he delivered this vulgar stuff with as much anxiety of emphasis as any of the genuine parts: and for acting, it is as well calculated as any. But we have seen the part of Richard lately produce great fame to an actor by his manner of playing it, and it lets us into the secret of acting, and of popular judgments of Shakspere derived from acting. Not one of the spectators who have witnessed Mr. C.'s exertions in that part, but has come away with a proper conviction that Richard is a very wicked man, and kills little children in their beds, with something like the pleasure which the giants and ogres in children's books are represented to have

taken in that practice; moreover, that he is very close and shrewd, and devilish cunning, for you could see that by his eye.

But is in fact this the impression we have in reading the Richard of Shakspere? Do we feel anything like disgust, as we do at that butcher-like representation of him that passes for him on the stage? A horror at his crimes blends with the effect which we feel, but how is it qualified, how is it carried off, by the rich intellect which he displays, his resources, his wit, his buoyant spirits, his vast knowledge and insight into characters, the poetry of his part—not an atom of all which is made perceivable in Mr. C.'s way of acting it. Nothing but his crimes, his actions, is visible; they are prominent and staring; the murderer stands out, but where is the lofty genius, the man of vast capacity,—the profound, the witty, accomplished Richard?

The truth is, the characters of Shakspere are so much the objects of meditation rather than of interest or curiosity as to their actions, that while we are reading any of his great criminal characters,—Macbeth, Richard, even Iago,—we think not so much of the crimes which they commit, as of the ambition, the aspiring spirit, the intellectual activity which prompts them to overleap those moral fences. Barnwell is a wretched murderer; there is a certain fitness between his neck and the rope; he is the legitimate heir to the gallows; nobody who thinks at all can think of any alleviating circumstances in his case to make him a fit object of mercy. Or to take an instance from the higher tragedy, what else but a mere assassin is Glenalvon! Do we think of anything but of the crime which he commits, and the rack which he deserves? That is all which we really think about him. Whereas in corresponding characters in Shakspere so little do the actions comparatively affect us, that while the impulses, the inner mind in all its perverted greatness, solely seems real and is exclusively attended to, the crime is comparatively nothing. But when we see these things represented, the acts which they do are comparatively everything, their impulses nothing. The state of sublime emotion into which we are elevated by those images of night and horror which Macbeth is made to utter, that solemn prelude with which he entertains the time till the bell shall strike which is to call him to murder Duncan,—when we no longer read it in a book, when we have given up that vantage-ground of abstraction which reading possesses over seeing, and come to see a man in his bodily shape before our eyes actually preparing to commit a murder, if the acting be true and impressive, as I have witnessed it in Mr. K.'s performance of that part, the painful anxiety about the act, the natural longing to prevent it while it yet seems unperpetrated, the too close pressing semblance of reality, give a pain and an uneasiness which totally destroy all the delight which the words in the book convey, where the deed doing never presses upon us with the painful sense of presence: it rather seems to belong to history,—to something past and inevitable, if it has anything to do with time at all. The sublime images, the poetry alone, is that which is present to our minds in the reading.

So to see Lear acted,—to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking-stick, turned out of doors by his daughters in a rainy night, has nothing in it but what is painful and disgusting. We want to take him into shelter and relieve him. That is all the feeling which the acting of Lear ever produced in me. But the Lear of Shakspere cannot be acted. The contemptible machinery by which they mimic the storm which he goes out in, is not more inadequate to represent the horrors of the real elements, than any actor can be to represent Lear: they might more easily propose to personate the Satan of Milton upon a stage, or one of Michael Angelo's terrible figures. The greatness of Lear is not in corporal dimension, but in intellectual: the explosions of his passion are terrible as a volcano: they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea his mind, with all its vast riches. It is his mind which is laid bare. This case of flesh and blood seems too insignificant to be

thought on; even as he himself neglects it. On the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of rage; while we read it, we see not Lear, but we are Lear,—we are in his mind, we are sustained by a grandeur which baffles the malice of daughters and storms; in the aberrations of his reason, we discover a mighty irregular power of reasoning, immethodized from the ordinary purposes of life, but exerting its powers, as the wind blows where it listeth, at will upon the corruptions and abuses of mankind. What have looks, or tones, to do with that sublime identification of his age with that of the *heavens themselves*, when in his reproaches to them for conniving at the injustice of his children, he reminds them that "they themselves are old?" What gestures shall we appropriate to this? What has the voice or the eye to do with such things? But the play is beyond all art, as the tamperings with it show: it is too hard and stony; it must have love-scenes, and a happy ending. It is not enough that Cordelia is a daughter, she must shine as a lover too. Tate has put his hook in the nostrils of this Leviathan, for Garrick and his followers, the showmen of scene, to draw the mighty beast about more easily. A happy ending!—as if the living martyrdom that Lear had gone through,—the flaying of his feelings alive, did not make a fair dismissal from the stage of life the only decorous thing for him. If he is to live and be happy after, if he could sustain this world's burden after, why all this pudder and preparation,—why torment us with all this unnecessary sympathy? As if the childish pleasure of getting his gilt robes and sceptre again could tempt him to act over again his misused station,—as if at his years, and with his experience anything was left but to die.

*Lear* is essentially impossible to be represented on a stage. But how many dramatic personages are there in Shakspere, which though more tractable and feasible (if I may so speak) than Lear, yet from some circumstance, some adjunct to their character, are improper to be shown to our bodily eye. *Othello*, for instance. Nothing can be more soothing, more flattering to the nobler parts of our natures, than to read of a young Venetian lady of highest extraction, through the force of love and from a sense of merit in him whom she loved, laying aside every consideration of kindred, and country, and colour, and wedding with a *coal-black Moor*—(for such he is represented, in the imperfect state of knowledge respecting foreign countries in those days, compared with our own, or in compliance with popular notions, though the Moors are now well enough known to be by many shades less unworthy of white woman's fancy)—it is the perfect triumph of virtue over accidents, of the imagination over the senses. She sees Othello's colour in his mind. But upon the stage, when the imagination is no longer the ruling faculty, but we are left to our poor unassisted senses, I appeal to every one that has seen *Othello* played, whether he did not, on the contrary, sink Othello's mind in his colour; whether he did not find something extremely revolting in the courtship and wedded caresses of Othello and Desdemona; and whether the actual sight of the thing did not over-weigh all that beautiful compromise which we make in reading;—and the reason it should do so is obvious, because there is just so much reality presented to our senses as to give a perception of disagreement, with not enough of belief in the internal motives,—all that which is unseen,—to overpower and reconcile the first and obvious prejudices.* What we see upon a stage is body

* The error of supposing that because Othello's colour does not offend us in the reading, it should also not offend us in the seeing, is just such a fallacy as supposing that an Adam and Eve in a picture shall affect us just as they do in the poem. But in the poem we for a while have Paradisaical senses given us, which vanish when we see a man and his wife without clothes in the picture. The painters themselves feel this, as is apparent by the awkward shifts they have recourse to, to make them look not quite naked; by a sort of prophetic anachronism antedating the invention of fig-leaves. So in the reading of the play, we see with Desdemona's eyes; in the seeing of it, we are forced to look with our own.

and bodily action; what we are conscious of in reading is almost exclusively the mind, and its movements: and this, I think, may sufficiently account for the very different sort of delight with which the same play so often affects us in the reading and the seeing.

It requires little reflection to perceive, that if those characters in Shakspere which are within the precincts of nature, have yet something in them which appeals too exclusively to the imagination, to admit of their being made objects to the senses without suffering a change and a diminution,—that still stronger the objection must lie against representing another line of characters, which Shakspere has introduced to give a wildness and a supernatural elevation to his scenes, as if to remove them still farther from that assimilation to common life in which their excellence is vulgarly supposed to consist. When we read the incantations of those terrible beings the Witches in *Macbeth*, though some of the ingredients of their hellish composition savour of the grotesque, yet is the effect upon us other than the most serious and appalling that can be imagined? Do we not feel spell-bound as Macbeth was? Can any mirth accompany a sense of their presence? We might as well laugh under a consciousness of the principle of Evil himself being truly and really present with us. But attempt to bring these beings on to a stage, and you turn them instantly into so many old women, that men and children are to laugh at. Contrary to the old saying, that "seeing is believing," the sight actually destroys the faith: and the mirth in which we indulge at their expense, when we see these creatures upon a stage, seems to be a sort of indemnification which we make to ourselves for the terror which they put us in when reading made them an object of belief,—when we surrendered up our reason to the poet, as children to their nurses and their elders; and we laugh at our fears, as children who thought they saw something in the dark, triumph when the bringing in of a candle discovers the vanity of their fears. For this exposure of supernatural agents upon a stage is truly bringing in a candle to expose their own delusiveness. It is the solitary taper and the book that generates a faith in these terrors: a ghost by chandelier light, and in good company, deceives no spectators,—a ghost that can be measured by the eye, and his human dimensions made out at leisure. The sight of a well-lighted house, and a well-dressed audience, shall arm the most nervous child against any apprehensions: as Tom Brown says of the impenetrable skin of Achilles with his impenetrable armour over it, "Bully Dawson would have fought the devil with such advantages."

Much has been said, and deservedly, in reprobation of the vile mixture which Dryden has thrown into the *Tempest*: doubtless without some such vicious alloy, the impure ears of that age would never have sate out to hear so much innocence of love as is contained in the sweet courtship of Ferdinand and Miranda. But is the *Tempest* of Shakspere at all a subject for stage representation? It is one thing to read of an enchanter, and to believe the wondrous tale while we are reading it; but to have a conjuror brought before us in his conjuring-gown, with his spirits about him, which none but himself and some hundred of favoured spectators before the curtain are supposed to see, involves such a quantity of the *hateful incredible*, that all our reverence for the author cannot hinder us from perceiving such gross attempts upon the senses to be in the highest degree childish and inefficient. Spirits and fairies cannot be represented, they cannot even be painted,—they can only be believed. But the elaborate and anxious provision of scenery, which the luxury of the age demands, in these cases works a quite contrary effect to what is intended. That which in comedy, or plays of familiar life, adds so much to the life of the imitation, in plays which appeal to the higher faculties, positively destroys the illusion which it is introduced to aid. A parlour or a drawing-room,—a library opening into a garden,—a garden with an alcove in it,—a street, or the piazza

of Covent Garden, does well enough in a scene; we are content to give as much credit to it as it demands; or rather, we think little about it,—it is little more than reading at the top of a page, "Scene, a Garden;" we do not imagine ourselves there, but we readily admit the imitation of familiar objects. But to think by the help of painted trees and caverns, which we known to be painted, to transport our minds to Prospero, and his island and his lonely cell;* or by the aid of a fiddle dexterously thrown in, in an interval of speaking, to make us believe that we hear those supernatural noises of which the isle was full:—the Orrery Lecturer at the Haymarket might as well hope, by his musical glasses cleverly stationed out of sight behind his apparatus, to make us believe that we do indeed hear the crystal spheres ring out that chime, which if it were to inwrap our fancy long, Milton thinks,

> Time would run back and fetch the age of gold,
> And speckled vanity
> Would sicken soon and die,
> And leprous Sin would melt from earthly mould;
> Yea Hell itself would pass away,
> And leave its dolorous mansions to the peering day.

The Garden of Eden, with our first parents in it, is not more impossible to be shown on a stage, than the Enchanted Isle, with its no less interesting and innocent first settlers.

The subject of Scenery is closely connected with that of the Dresses, which are so anxiously attended to on our stage. I remember the last time I saw *Macbeth* played, the discrepancy I felt at the changes of garment which he varied,—the shiftings and re-shiftings, like a Romish priest at mass. The luxury of stage-improvements, and the importunity of the public eye, require this. The coronation robe of the Scottish monarch was fairly a counterpart to that which our King wears when he goes to the Parliament-house,—just so full and cumbersome, and set out with ermine and pearls. And if things must be represented, I see not what to find fault with in this. But in reading, what robe are we conscious of? Some dim images of royalty—a crown and sceptre, may float before our eyes, but who shall describe the fashion of it? Do we see in our mind's eye what Webb or any other robe-maker could pattern? This is the inevitable consequence of imitating everything, to make all things natural. Whereas the reading of a tragedy is a fine abstraction. It presents to the fancy just so much of external appearances as to make us feel that we are among flesh and blood, while by far the greater and better part of our imagination is employed upon the thoughts and internal machinery of the character. But in acting, scenery, dress, the most contemptible things, call upon us to judge of their naturalness.

Perhaps it would be no bad similitude, to liken the pleasure which we take in seeing one of these fine plays acted, compared with that quiet delight which we find in the reading of it, to the different feelings with which a reviewer, and a man that is not a reviewer, reads a fine poem. The accursed critical habit,—the being called upon to judge and pronounce, must make it quite a different thing to the former. In seeing these plays acted, we are affected just as judges. When Hamlet compares the two pictures of Gertrude's first and second husband, who wants to see the pictures? But in the acting, a miniature must be lugged out; which we know not to be the picture, but only to show how finely a miniature may be represented. This showing of everything, levels all things: it makes tricks, bows, and curtseys, of importance. Mrs. S. never got more

* It will be said these things are done in pictures. But picture and scenes are very different things. Painting is a world of itself, but in scene-painting there is the attempt to deceive; and there is the discordancy, never to be got over, between painted scenes and real people.

fame by anything than by the manner in which she dismisses the guests in the banquet-scene in *Macbeth:* it is as much remembered as any of her thrilling tones or impressive looks. But does such a trifle as this enter into the imaginations of the reader of that wild and wonderful scene? Does not the mind dismiss the feasters as rapidly as it can? Does it care about the gracefulness of the doing it? But by acting, and judging of acting, all these non-essentials are raised into an importance, injurious to the main interest of the play.

I have confined my observations to the tragic parts of Shakspere. It would be no very difficult task to extend the inquiry to his comedies; and to show why Falstaff, Shallow, Sir Hugh Evans, and the rest are equally incompatible with stage representation. The length to which this Essay has run, will make it, I am afraid, sufficiently distasteful to the Amateurs of the Theatre, without going any deeper into the subject at present.

# On the Elizabethan Dramatists.

(*Notes in "Specimens of Dramatic Poets,"* 1808.)

[The title of this work, as it originally appeared—when it was published as a half-guinea volume, in Paternoster Row, by the Messrs. Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme—ran thus: "Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakspere: with Notes by Charles Lamb."]

## PREFACE.

MORE than a third part of the following specimens are from plays which are to be found only in the British Museum, and in some scarce private libraries. The rest are from Dodsley's and Hawkins's collections, and the works of Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger.

I have chosen wherever I could to give entire scenes, and in some instances successive scenes, rather than to string together single passages and detached beauties, which I have always found wearisome in the reading in selections of this nature.

To every extract is prefixed an explanatory head, sufficient to make it intelligible with the help of some trifling omissions. Where a line or more was obscure, as having reference to something that had gone before, which would have asked more time to explain than its consequence in the scene seemed to deserve, I have had no hesitation in leaving the line or passage out. Sometimes where I have met with a superfluous character, which seemed to burthen without throwing any light upon the scene, I have ventured to dismiss it altogether. I have expunged without ceremony all that which the writers had better never have written, that forms the objection so often repeated to the promiscuous reading of Fletcher, Massinger, and some others.

The kind of extracts which I have sought after have been, not so much passages of wit and humour, though the old plays are rich in such, as scenes of passion, sometimes of the deepest quality, interesting situations, serious descriptions, that which is more nearly allied to poetry than to wit, and to tragic rather than to comic poetry. The plays which I have made choice of

have been, with few exceptions, those which treat of human life and manners, rather than masques, and Arcadian pastorals, with their train of abstractions, unimpassioned deities, passionate mortals, Claius, and Medorus, and Amintas, and Amarillis. My leading design has been, to illustrate what may be called the moral sense of our ancestors : to show in what manner they felt, when they placed themselves by the power of imagination in trying situations, in the conflicts of duty and passion, or the strife of contending duties; what sort of loves and enmities theirs were; how their griefs were tempered, and their full-swoln joys abated: how much of Shakspere shines in the great men his contemporaries, and how far in his divine mind and manners he surpassed them and all mankind.

Another object which I had in making these selections was, to bring together the most admired scenes in Fletcher and Massinger, in the estimation of the world the only dramatic poets of that age who are entitled to be considered after Shakspere, and to exhibit them in the same volume with the more impressive scenes of old Marlowe, Heywood, Tourneur, Webster, Ford, and others, to show what we have slighted, while beyond all proportion we have cried up one or two favourite names.

The specimens are not accompanied with anything in the shape of biographical notices.* I had nothing of consequence to add to the slight sketches in Dodsley and the "Biographia Dramatica," and I was unwilling to swell the volume with mere transcription. The reader will not fail to observe from the frequent instances of two or more persons joining in the composition of the same play (the noble practice of those times), that of most of the writers contained in these selections it may be strictly said, that they were contemporaries. The whole period, from the middle of Elizabeth's reign to the close of the reign of Charles I., comprises a space of little more than half a century, within which time nearly all that we have of excellence in serious dramatic composition was produced, if we except the *Samson Agonistes* of Milton.

## CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

*Lust's Dominion, or the Lascivious Queen.*—Kit Marlowe, as old Izaak Walton assures us, made that *smooth song* which begins "Come live with me and be my love." The same romantic invitations "in folly ripe in reason rotten," are given by the queen in the play, and the lover in the ditty. He talks of "beds of roses, buckles of gold :"

> Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
> *As precious as the Gods do eat,*
> Shall on an ivory table be
> Prepared each day for thee and me.

The lines in the extract have a luscious smoothness in them, and they were the most temperate which I could pick out of this Play. The rest is in King Cambyses' vein ; rape, and murder, and superlatives; "huffing, braggart, puft" lines, such as the play-writers anterior to Shakspere are full of, and Pistol "but coldly imitates." *Blood* is made as light of in some of these old dramas as *money* in a modern sentimental comedy ; and as *this* is given away until it remind us that it is nothing but counters, so *that* is spilt till it affects us no more than its representative, the paint of the property-man in the theatre.

*Tamburlaine the Great, or the Scythian Shepherd.*—The lunes of Tamburlaine are perfect midsummer madness. Nebuchadnazar's are mere modest pretens ons compared with the thundering vaunts of this Scythian Shepherd. He comes in, drawn by conquered kings, and reproaches these *pampered jades of*

* The few notes which are interspersed will be found to be chiefly critical.

*Asia* that they can *draw but twenty miles a day.* Till I saw this passage with my own eyes, I never believed that it was anything more than a pleasant burlesque of mine ancient's. But I can assure my readers that it is soberly set down in a play which their ancestors took to be serious.

*Edward the Second.*—In a very different style from the mighty Tamburlaine is the tragedy of *Edward the Second.* The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty in Edward furnished hints, which Shakspere scarcely improved in his *Richard the Second;* and the death-scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene ancient or modern with which I am acquainted.

*The Rich Jew of Malta.*—Marlowe's Jew does not approach so near to Shakspere's, as his Edward the Second does to Richard the Second. Barabas is a mere monster brought in with a large painted nose to please the rabble. He kills in sport, poisons whole nunneries, invents infernal machines. He is just such an exhibition as a century or two earlier might have been played before the Londoners "by the royal command," when a general pillage and massacre of the Hebrews had been previously resolved on in the cabinet. It is curious to see a superstition wearing out. The idea of a Jew, which our pious ancestors contemplated with so much horror, has nothing in it now revolting. We have tamed the claws of the beast, and pared its nails, and now we take it to our arms, fondle it, write plays to flatter it; it is visited by princes, affects a taste, patronizes the arts, and is the only liberal and gentlemanlike thing in Christendom.

*Doctor Faustus.*—The growing horrors of Faustus's last scene are awfully marked by the hours and half hours as they expire, and bring him nearer and nearer to the exactment of his dire compact. It is indeed an agony and a fearful colluctation. Marlowe is said to have been tainted with atheistical positions, to have denied God and the Trinity. To such a genius the history of Faustus must have been delectable food: to wander in fields where curiosity is forbidden to go, to approach the dark gulf near enough to look in, to be busied in speculations which are the rottenest part of the core of the fruit that fell from the tree of knowledge. Barabas the Jew, and Faustus the conjurer, are offsprings of a mind which at least delighted to dally with interdicted subjects. They both talk a language which a believer would have been tender of putting into the mouth of a character though but in fiction. But the holiest minds have sometimes not thought it reprehensible to counterfeit impiety in the person of another, to bring Vice upon the stage speaking her own dialect; and themselves being armed with an unction of self-confident impunity, have not scrupled to handle and touch that familiarly, which would be death to others. Milton in the person of Satan has started speculations hardier than any which the feeble armoury of the atheist ever furnished; and the precise, strait-laced Richardson has strengthened Vice from the mouth of Lovelace, with entangling sophistries and abstruse pleas against her adversary Virtue, which Sedley, Villiers, and Rochester wanted depth of libertinism enough to have invented.

## THOMAS DEKKER.

*Old Fortunatus.*—The humour of a frantic lover, in the scene where Orleans to his friend Galloway defends the passion with which himself, being a prisoner in the English king's court, is enamoured to frenzy of the king's daughter Agripyna, is done to the life. Orleans is as passionate an inamorato as any which Shakspere ever drew. He is just such another adept in Love's reasons. The sober people of the world are with him

——————A swarm of fools<br>
Crowding together to be counted wise.

He talks "pure Biron and Romeo," he is almost as poetical as they, quite as

philosophical, only a little madder. After all, Love's sectaries are a reason unto themselves. We have gone retrograde to the noble heresy, since the days when Sidney proselyted our nation to this mixed health and disease; the kindliest symptom, yet the most alarming crisis in the ticklish state of youth; the nourisher and the destroyer of hopeful wits; the mother of twin births, wisdom and folly, valour and weakness; the servitude above freedom; the gentle mind's religion; the liberal superstition.

*Satiro-Mastix, or the untrussing of the Humorous Poet.*—[The king exacts an oath from Sir Walter Terill to send his bride Cælestina to court on the marriage night. Her father, to save her honour, gives her a poisonous mixture which she swallows.]

The beauty and force of this scene are much diminished to the reader of the entire play, when he comes to find that this solemn preparation is but a sham contrivance of the father's, and the potion which Cælestina swallows nothing more than a sleeping draught; from the effects of which she is to awake in due time, to the surprise of her husband, and the great mirth and edification of the king and his courtiers. As Hamlet says, they do but "poison in jest." The sentiments are worthy of a real martyrdom, and an Appian sacrifice in earnest,

*The Honest Whore.*—There is in the second part of this play, where Bellafront, a reclaimed harlot, recounts some of the miseries of her profession, a simple picture of honour and shame, contrasted without violence, and expressed without immodesty, which is worth all the *strong lines* against the harlot's profession, with which both parts of this play are offensively crowded. A satirist is always to be suspected, who, to make vice odious, dwells upon all its acts and minutest circumstances with a sort of relish and retrospective fondness But so near are the boundaries of panegyric and invective, that a worn-out sinner is sometimes found to make the best declaimer against sin. The same high-seasoned descriptions, which in his unregenerate state served but to inflame his appetites, in his new province of moralist will serve him, a little turned, to expose the enormity of those appetites in other men. When Cervantes with such proficiency of fondness dwells upon the Don's library, who sees not that he has been a great reader of books of knight-errantry—perhaps was at some time of his life in danger of falling into those very extravagancies which he ridiculed so happily in his hero?

## JOHN MARSTON.

*Antonio and Mellida.*—The situation of Andrugio and Lucio, in the first part of this tragedy, where Andrugio Duke of Genoa, banished his country, with the loss of a son supposed drowned, is cast upon the territory of his mortal enemy the Duke of Venice, with no attendants but Lucio an old nobleman, and a page——resembles that of Lear and Kent in that king's distresses. Andrugio, like Lear, manifests a king-like impatience, a turbulent greatness, an affected resignation. The enemies which he enters lists to combat, "Despair and mighty Grief and sharp Impatience," and the forces which he brings to vanquish them, "cornets of horse," &c., are in the boldest style of allegory. They are such a "race of mourners" as the "infection of sorrows loud" in the intellect might beget on some "pregnant cloud" in the imagination. The prologue to the second part, for its passionate earnestness, and for the tragic note of preparation which it sounds, might have preceded one of those old tales of Thebes or Pelops' line, which Milton has so highly commended, as free from the common error of the poets in his day, of "intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity, brought in without discretion corruptly to gratify the people." It is as solemn a preparative as the warning voice which he who saw the Apocalypse heard cry.

*What you will. O I shall ne'er forget how he went clothed.* Act I. Scene I.

—To judge of the liberality of these notions of dress, we must advert to the days of Gresham, and the consternation which a phenomenon habited like the merchant here described would have excited among the flat round caps and cloth stockings upon 'Change, when those "original arguments or tokens of a citizen's vocation were in fashion, not more for thrift and usefulness than for distinction and grace." The blank uniformity to which all professional distinctions in apparel have been long hastening is one instance of the decay of symbols among us, which whether it has contributed or not to make us a more intellectual, has certainly made us a less imaginative people. Shakspere knew the force of signs: a "malignant and a turban'd Turk." This "meal-cap miller," says the author of *God's Revenge against Murder*, to express his indignation at an atrocious outrage committed by the miller Pierot upon the person of the fair Marieta.

### AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

*The Merry Devil of Edmonton.**—The scene in this delightful comedy, in which Jerningham, "with the true feeling of a zealous friend," touches the griefs of Mounchensey, seems written to make the reader happy. Few of our dramatists or novelists have attended enough to this. They torture and wound us abundantly. They are economists only in delight. Nothing can be finer, more gentlemanlike, and nobler, than the conversation and compliments of these young men. How delicious is Raymond Mounchensey's forgetting, in his fears, that Jerningham has a "Saint in Essex;" and how sweetly his friend reminds him! I wish it could be ascertained, that Michael Drayton was the author of this piece. It would add a worthy appendage to the renown of that Panegyrist of my native Earth: who has gone over her soil, in his Polyolbion, with the fidelity of a herald, and the painful love of a son; who has not left a rivulet, so narrow that it may be stepped over, without honourable mention; and has animated hills and streams with life and passion beyond the dreams of old mythology.

### THOMAS HEYWOOD.

*The Fair Maid of the Exchange.*—The full title of this play is "The Fair Maid of the Exchange, with the Humours of the Cripple of Fenchurch." The above satire against some Dramatic Plagiarists of the time, is put into the mouth of the Cripple, who is an excellent fellow, and the hero of the Comedy. Of his humour this extract is a sufficient specimen; but he is described (albeit a tradesman, yet wealthy withal) with heroic qualities of mind and body; the latter of which he evinces by rescuing his mistress (the Fair Maid) from three robbers by the main force of one crutch lustily applied; and the former by his foregoing the advantages which this action gained him in her good opinion, and bestowing his wit and finesse in procuring for her a husband, in the person of his friend Golding, more worthy of her beauty, than he could conceive his own maimed and halting limbs to be. It would require some boldness in a dramatist nowadays to exhibit such a character; and some luck in finding a sufficient actor, who would be willing to personate the infirmities, together with the virtues, of the noble Cripple.

*A Woman Killed with Kindness.*—Heywood is a sort of *prose* Shakspere. His scenes are to the full as natural and affecting. But we miss *the poet*, that which in Shakspere always appears out and above the surface of *the nature*. Heywood's characters in this play, for instance, his country gentlemen, &c., are exactly what we see, but of the best kind of what we see in life. Shakspere makes us believe, while we are among his lovely creations, that they are nothing

* It has been ascribed without much proof to Shakspere and to Michael Drayton.

but what we are familiar with, as in dreams new things seem old; but we awake, and sigh for the difference.

I am tempted to extract some lines from Heywood's "Hierarchie of Angels, 1634;" not strictly as a Dramatic Poem, but because the passage contains a string of names, all but that of *Watson*, his contemporary Dramatists. He is complaining in a mood half serious, half comic, of the disrespect which Poets in his own times meet with from the world, compared with the honours paid them by Antiquity. *Then*, they could afford them three or four sonorous names, and at full length; as to Ovid, the addition of Publius Naso Sulmensis; to Seneca, that of Lucius Annæas Cordubensis; and the like. *Now*, says he,

Our modern Poets to that pass are driven,
Those names are curtail'd which they first had given;
And, as we wish'd to have their memories drown'd,
We scarcely can afford them half their sound,
Greene, who had in both Academies ta'en
Degree of Master, yet could never gain
To be call'd more than Robin: who, had he
Professed aught save the Muse, served, and been free
After a seven years' 'prenticeship, might have
(With credit too) gone Robert to his grave.
Marlowe, renown'd for his rare art and wit,
Could ne'er attain beyond the name of Kit;
Although his Hero and Leander did
Merit addition rather. Famous Kid
Was call'd but Tom. Tom Watson, though he wrote
Able to make Apollo's self to dote
Upon his Muse; for all that he could strive,
Yet never could to his full name arrive.
Tom Nash (in his time of no small esteem)
Could not a second syllable redeem.
Excellent Beaumont, in the foremost rank
Of the rarest wits, was never more than Frank.
Mellifluous Shakspere, whose enchanting quill
Commanded mirth or passion, was but Will;
And Famous Jonson, though his learned pen
Be dipp'd in Castaly, is still but Ben.
Fletcher, and Webster, of that learned pack
None of the meanest, neither was but Jack;
Dekker's but Tom; nor May, nor Middleton;
And he's now but Jack Ford, that once was John.

Possibly our Poet was a little sore, that this contemptuous curtailment of their baptismal names was chiefly exercised upon his poetical brethren of the *Drama*. We hear nothing about Sam Daniel or Ned Spenser, in his catalogue. The familiarity of common discourse might probably take the greater liberties with the Dramatic Poets, as conceiving of them as more upon a level with the Stage Actors. Or did their greater publicity, and popularity in consequence, fasten these diminutives upon them out of a feeling of love and kindness, as we say Harry the Fifth, rather than Henry, when we would express goodwill?—as himself says, in those reviving words put into his mouth by Shakspere, where he would comfort and confirm his doubting brothers:—

Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
But Harry, Harry!

And doubtless Heywood had an indistinct conception of this truth, when (coming to his own name), with that beautiful *retracting* which is natural to one that, not satirically given, has wandered a little out of his way into something recriminative, he goes on to say:—

> Nor speak I this, that any here exprest
> Should think themselves less worthy than the rest
> Whose names have their full syllables and sound;
> Or that Frank, Kit, or Jack, are the least wound
> Unto their fame and merit. I for my part
> (Think others what they please) except that heart,
> Which courts my love in most familiar phrase:
> And that it takes not from my pains or praise,
> If any one to me so bluntly come:
> I hold he loves me best that calls me Tom.

The foundations of the English Drama were laid deep in *tragedy* by Marlowe and others—Marlowe especially—while our *comedy* was yet in its lisping state. To this tragic preponderance (forgetting his own sweet Comedies and Shakspere's), Heywood seems to refer with regret; as in the "Roscian Strain" he evidently alludes to Alleyn, who was great in the "Jew of Malta," as Heywood elsewhere testifies, and in the principal tragic parts both of Marlowe and Shakspere.

*The Brazen Age.*—I cannot take leave of this Drama without noticing a touch of the truest pathos, which the writer has put into the mouth of Meleager, as he is wasting away by the operation of the fatal brand, administered to him by his wretched Mother.

> My flame increaseth still—Oh Father Œneus;
> And you, Althea, whom I would call Mother,
> But that my genius prompts me thou'rt unkind:
> *And yet farewell!*

What is the boasted "Forgive me, but forgive me!" of the dying wife of Shore in Rowe, compared with these three little words?

*The English Traveller.*—Heywood's preface to this play is interesting, as it shows the heroic indifference about the opinion of posterity, which some of these great writers seem to have felt. There is a magnanimity in authorship as in everything else. His ambition seems to have been confined to the pleasure of hearing the players speak his lines while he lived. It does not appear that he ever contemplated the possibility of being read by after-ages. What a slender pittance of fame was motive sufficient to the production of such plays as the English Traveller, the Challenge for Beauty, and the Woman Killed with Kindness! Posterity is bound to take care that a writer loses nothing by such a noble modesty.

If I were to be consulted as to a Reprint of our Old English Dramatists, I should advise to begin with the collected Plays of Heywood. He was a fellow Actor, and fellow Dramatist, with Shakspere. He possessed not the imagination of the latter; but in all those qualities which gained for Shakspere the attribute of *gentle*, he was not inferior to him. Generosity, courtesy, temperance in the depths of passion; sweetness, in a word, and gentleness; Christianism; and true hearty Anglicism of feelings, shaping that Christianism; shine throughout his beautiful writings in a manner more conspicuous than in those of Shakspere, but only more conspicuous, inasmuch as in Heywood these qualities are primary, in the other subordinate to poetry. I love them both equally, but Shakspere has most of my wonder. Heywood should be known to his countryman, as he deserves. His plots are almost invariably English. I am sometimes jealous, that Shakspere laid so few of his scenes at home. I laud Ben Jonson, for that in one instance having framed the first draught of his *Every Man in his Humour* in Italy, he changed the scene, and Anglicised his characters. The names of them in the First Edition, may not be unamusing.

| *Men.* | *Women.* |
|---|---|
| Lorenzo, Sen. | Guilliana. |
| Lorenzo, Jun. | Biancha. |
| Prospero. | Hesperida. |
| Thorello. | Tib (the same in English). |
| Stephano (Master Stephen). | |
| Dr. Clement (Justice Clement). | |
| Bobadilla (Bobadil). | |
| Musco. | |
| Cob (the same in English). | |
| Peto. | |
| Pizo. | |
| Matheo (Master Mathew). | |

How say you, Reader? do not Master Kitely, Mistress Kitely, Master Knowell, Brainworm, &c., read better than these Cisalpines?

### THOMAS MIDDLETON AND WILLIAM ROWLEY.

*A Fair Quarrel.*—The insipid levelling morality to which the modern stage is tied down, would not admit of such admirable passions as these scenes are filled with. A puritanical obtuseness of sentiment, a stupid infantile goodness, is creeping among us, instead of the vigorous passions, and virtues clad in flesh and blood, with which the old dramatists present us. Those noble and liberal causists could discern in the differences, the quarrels, the animosities of men, a beauty and truth of moral feeling, no less than in the everlastingly inculcated duties of forgiveness and atonement. With us, all is hypocritical meekness. A reconciliation-scene, be the occasion never so absurd, never fails of applause. Our audiences come to the theatre to be complimented on their goodness. They compare notes with the amiable characters in the play, and find a wonderful sympathy of disposition between them. We have a common stock of dramatic morality, out of which a writer may be supplied without the trouble of copying it from originals within his own breast. To know the boundaries of honour, to be judiciously valiant, to have a temperance which shall beget a smoothness in the angry swellings of youth, to esteem life as nothing when the sacred reputation of a parent is to be defended, yet to shake and tremble under a pious cowardice when that ark of an honest confidence is found to be frail and tottering, to feel the true blows of a real disgrace blunting that sword which the imaginary strokes of a supposed false imputation had put so keen an edge upon but lately : to do, or to imagine this done in a feigned story, asks something more of a moral sense, somewhat a greater delicacy of perception in questions of right and wrong, than goes to the writing of two or three hackneyed sentences about the laws of honour as opposed to the laws of the land, or a commonplace against duelling. Yet such things would stand a writer nowadays in far better stead than Captain Agar and his conscientious honour; and he would be considered as a far better teacher of morality than old Rowley or Middleton, if they were living.

### WILLIAM ROWLEY.

*A New Wonder; A Woman Never Vexed.*—The old play-writers are distinguished by an honest boldness of exhibition, they show everything without being ashamed. If a reverse in fortune is to be exhibited, they fairly bring us to the prison-grate and the alms-basket. A poor man on our stage is always a gentleman, he may be known by a peculiar neatness of apparel, and by wearing black. Our delicacy in fact forbids the dramatizing of distress at all. It is never shown in its essential properties; it appears but as the adjunct of

some virtue, as something which is to be relieved, from the approbation of which relief the spectators are to derive a certain soothing of self-referred satisfaction. We turn away from the real essences of things to hunt after their relative shadows, moral duties; whereas, if the truth of things were fairly represented, the relative duties might be safely trusted to themselves, and moral philosophy lose the name of a science.

### THOMAS MIDDLETON.

*Women beware Women: A Tragedy.*—[Livia, the Duke's creature, cajoles a poor Widow with the appearance of hospitality and neighbourly attentions, that she may get her daughter-in-law (who is left in the Mother's care in the Son's absence) into her trains, to serve the Duke's pleasure.]

This is one of those scenes which has the air of being an immediate transcript from life. Livia the "good neighbour" is as real a creature as one of Chaucer's characters. She is such another jolly Housewife as the Wife of Bath.

*The Witch.*—Though some resemblance may be traced between the charms in *Macbeth*, and the incantations in this play, which is supposed to have preceded it, this coincidence will not detract much from the originality of Shakspere. His witches are distinguished from the witches of Middleton by essential differences. These are creatures to whom man or woman, plotting some dire mischief, might resort for occasional consultation. Those originate deeds of blood, and begin bad impulses to men. From the moment that their eyes first meet with Macbeth's, he is spell-bound. That meeting sways his destiny. He can never break the fascination. These witches can hurt the body, those have power over the soul. Hecate in Middleton has a son, a low buffoon: the hags of Shakspere have neither child of their own, nor seem to be descended from any parent. They are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, nor whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, so they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning, and vanish to airy music. This is all we know of them. Except Hecate, they have no *names;* which heightens their mysteriousness. The names, and some of the properties, which the other author has given to his hags, excite smiles. The Weird Sisters are serious things. Their presence cannot co-exist with mirth. But, in a lesser degree, the witches of Middleton are fine creations. Their power too is, in some measure, over the mind. They raise jars, jealousies, strifes, "like a thick scurf" over life.

### WILLIAM ROWLEY,—THOMAS DEKKER,—JOHN FORD, &c.

*The Witch of Edmonton.*—Mother Sawyer, in this wild play, differs from the hags of both Middleton and Shakspere. She is the plain traditional old woman witch of our ancestors; poor, deformed, and ignorant; the terror of villages, herself amenable to a justice. That should be a hardy sheriff with the power of the county at his heels, that would lay hands upon the Weird Sisters. They are of another jurisdiction. But upon the common and received opinion, the author (or authors) have engrafted strong fancy. There is something frightfully earnest in her invocations to the Familiar.

### CYRIL TOURNEUR.

*The Atheist's Tragedy.—Drowned Soldier.*—This way of description, which seems unwilling ever to leave off, weaving parenthesis within parenthesis, was brought to its height by Sir Philip Sidney. He seems to have set the example

to Shakspere. Many beautiful instances may be found all over the Arcadia. These bountiful Wits always give full measure, pressed down and running over.

*The Revengers' Tragedy.*—The reality and life of the dialogue, in which Vindici and Hippolito first tempt their mother, and then threaten her with death for consenting to the dishonour of their sister, passes any scenical illusion I ever felt. I never read it but my ears tingle, and I feel a hot blush overspread my cheeks, as if I were presently about to proclaim such malefactions of myself as the brothers here rebuke in their unnatural parent, in words more keen and dagger-like than those which Hamlet speaks to his mother. Such power has the passion of shame truly personated, not only to strike guilty creatures unto the soul, but to "appal" even those that are "free."

## JOHN WEBSTER.

*The Duchess of Malfy.*—All the several parts of the dreadful apparatus with which the death of the Duchess is ushered in, the waxen images which counterfeit death, the wild masque of madmen, the tombmaker, the bellman, the living person's dirge, the mortification by degrees,—are not more remote from the conceptions of ordinary vengeance, than the strange character of suffering which they seem to bring upon their victim is out of the imagination of ordinary poets. As they are not like inflictions of this life, so her language seems not of this world. She has lived among horrors till she is become "native and endowed unto that element." She speaks the dialect of despair; her tongue has a smatch of Tartarus and the souls in bale. To move a horror skilfully, to touch a soul to the quick, to lay upon fear as much as it can bear, to wean and weary a life till it is ready to drop, and then step in with mortal instruments to take its last forfeit: this only a Webster can do. Inferior geniuses may "upon horror's head horrors accumulate," but they cannot do this. They mistake quantity for quality; they "terrify babes with painted devils;" but they know not how a soul is to be moved. Their terrors want dignity, their affrightments are without decorum.

*The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona.*—This White Devil of Italy sets off a bad cause so speciously, and pleads with such an innocence-resembling boldness, that we seem to see that matchless beauty of her face which inspires such gay confidence into her, and are ready to expect, when she has done her pleadings, that her very judges, her accusers, the grave ambassadors who sit as spectators, and all the court, will rise and make proffer to defend her in spite of the utmost conviction of her guilt; as the Shepherds in Don Quixote make proffer to follow the beautiful Shepherdess Marcela, "without making any profit of her manifest resolution made there in their hearing."

> So sweet and lovely does she make the shame,
> Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
> Does spot the beauty of her budding name!

I never saw anything like the funeral dirge* in this play, for the death of Marcello, except the ditty which reminds Ferdinand of his drowned father in the *Tempest.* As that is of the water, watery; so this is of the earth, earthy. Both have that intenseness of feeling, which seems to resolve itself into the element which it contemplates.

In a note on the Spanish Tragedy, I have said that there is nothing in the undoubted plays of Jonson which would authorize us to suppose that he could have supplied the additions to Hieronymo. I suspected the agency of some

* Webster was parish clerk at St. Andrew's, Holborn. The anxious recurrence to church matters; sacrilege; tomb-stones; with the frequent introduction *of dirges;* in this, and his other tragedies, may be traced to his professional sympathies.

more potent spirit. I thought that Webster might have furnished them. They seemed full of that wild, solemn, preternatural cast of grief which bewilders us in the *Duchess of Malfy*. On second consideration, I think this a hasty criticism. They are more like the overflowing griefs and talking distraction of *Titus Andronicus*. The sorrows of the Duchess set inward; if she talks, it is little more than soliloquy imitating conversation in a kind of bravery.

### JOHN FORD.

*The Lover's Melancholy: Contention of a Bird and a Musician.*—This Story, which is originally to be met with in Strada's Prolusions, has been paraphrased in rhyme by Crashaw, Ambrose Philips, and others: but none of those versions can at all compare for harmony and grace with this blank verse of Ford's. It is as fine as anything in Beaumont and Fletcher; and almost equals the strife which it celebrates.

*'Tis Pity she's a Whore; a Tragedy.*—The good Friar in this play is evidently a copy of Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*. He is the same kind physician to the souls of his young charges; but he has more desperate patients to deal with.

*The Broken Heart.*—I do not know where to find, in any play, a catastrophe so grand, so solemn, and so surprising as in this. This is, indeed, according to Milton, to describe high passions and high actions. The fortitude of the Spartan boy, who let a beast gnaw out his bowels till he died without expressing a groan, is a faint bodily image of this dilaceration of the spirit, and exenteration of the inmost mind, which Calantha, with a holy violence against her nature, keeps closely covered, till the last duties of a wife and a queen are fulfilled. Stories of martyrdom are but of chains and the stake; a little bodily suffering. These torments

> On the purest spirits prey,
> As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
> With answerable pains, but more intense.

What a noble thing is the soul in its strength and in its weaknesses! Who would be less weak than Calantha? Who can be so strong? The expression of this transcendent scene almost bears us in imagination to Calvary and the Cross; and we seem to perceive some analogy between the scenical sufferings which we are here contemplating, and the real agonies of that final completion to which we dare no more than hint a reference. Ford was of the first order of poets. He sought for sublimity, not by parcels, in metaphors or visible images, but directly where she has her full residence in the heart of man; in the actions and sufferings of the greatest minds. There is a grandeur of the soul above mountains, seas, and the elements. Even in the poor perverted reason of Giovanni and Annabella, in the play* which stands at the head of the modern collection of the works of this author, we discern traces of that fiery particle, which, in the irregular starting from out the road of beaten action, discovers something of a right line even in obliquity, and shows hints of an improvable greatness in the lowest descents and degradations of our nature.

### FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE.

*Alaham, Mustapha.*—The two tragedies of Lord Brooke, printed among his poems, might with more propriety have been termed political treatises than plays. Their author has strangely contrived to make passion, character, and interest of the highest order, subservient to the expression of state dogmas and mysteries. He is nine parts Machiavel and Tacitus, for one part Sophocles or Seneca. In this writer's estimate of the powers of the mind, the understanding

* *'Tis Pity she's a Whore.*

must have held a most tyrannical pre-eminence. Whether we look into his plays, or his most passionate love-poems, we shall find all frozen and made rigid with intellect. The finest movements of the human heart, the utmost grandeur of which the soul is capable, are essentially comprised in the actions and speeches of Cælica and Camena. Shakspere, who seems to have had a peculiar delight in contemplating womanly perfection, whom for his many sweet images of female excellence all women are in an especial manner bound to love, has not raised the ideal of the female character higher than Lord Brooke, in these two women, has done. But it requires a study equivalent to the learning of a new language to understand their meaning when they speak. It is indeed hard to hit:

> Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day,
> Or seven though one should musing sit.

It is as if a being of pure intellect should take upon him to express the emotions of our sensitive natures. There would be all knowledge, but sympathetic expressions would be wanting.

BEN JONSON.

*The Case is Altered.*—The passion for wealth has worn out much of its grossness in tract of time. Our ancestors certainly conceived of money as able to confer a distinct gratification in itself, not considered simply as a symbol of wealth. The old poets, when they introduce a miser, make him address his gold as his mistress; as something to be seen, felt, and hugged; as capable of satisfying two of the senses at least. The substitution of a thin, unsatisfying medium in the place of the good old tangible metal, has made avarice quite a Platonic affection in comparison with the seeing, touching, and handling-pleasures of the old Chrysophilites. A bank-note can no more satisfy he touch of a true sensualist in this passion, than Creusa could return her husband's embrace in the shades. See the Cave of Mammon in Spenser; Barabas's contemplation of his wealth in the *Rich Jew of Malta;* Luke's raptures in the *City Madam;* the idolatry and absolute gold-worship of the miser Jaques in this early comic production of Ben Jonson's. Above all hear Guzman, in that excellent old translation of the *Spanish Rogue,* expatiate on the "ruddy cheeks of your golden ruddocks, your Spanish pistolets, your plump and full-faced Portuguese, and your clear-skinned pieces of eight of Castile," which he and his fellows the beggars kept secret to themselves, and did privately enjoy in a plentiful manner. "For to have them, to pay them away, is not to enjoy them; to enjoy them, is to have them lying by us; having no other need of them than to use them for the clearing of the eyesight, and the comforting of our senses. These we did carry about with us, sewing them in some patches of our doublets near unto the heart, and as close to the skin as we could handsomely quilt them in, holding them to be restorative."

*Poetaster.*—This Roman play seems written to confute those enemies of Ben in his own days and ours, who have said that he made a pedantical use of his learning. He has here revived the whole Court of Augustus, by a learned spell. We are admitted to the society of the illustrious dead. Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, converse in our own tongue more finely and poetically than they were used to express themselves in their native Latin. Nothing can be imagined more elegant, refined, and court-like, than the scenes between this Louis the Fourteenth of antiquity and his literati. The whole essence and secret of that kind of intercourse is contained therein. The economical liberality by which greatness, seeming to waive some part of its prerogative, takes care to lose none of the essentials; the prudential liberties of an inferior, which flatter by commanded boldness and soothe with complimentary sincerity. These, and a thousand beautiful passages from his *New Inn,* his *Cynthia's Revels,* and from

those numerous court-masques and entertainments which he was in the daily habit of furnishing, might be adduced to show the poetical fancy and elegance of mind of the supposed rugged old bard.

*Alchemist.*—The judgment is perfectly overwhelmed by the torment of images, words, and book-knowledge, with which Epicure Mammon (Act 2, Scene 2) confounds and stuns his incredulous hearer. They come pouring out like the successive falls of the Nilus. They "doubly redouble strokes upon the foe." Description outstrides proof. We are made to believe effects before we have testimony for their causes. If there is no one image which attains the height of the sublime, yet the confluence and assemblage of them all produces a result equal to the grandest poetry. The huge Xerxean army countervails against single Achilles. Epicure Mammon is the most determined offspring of its author. It has the whole "matter and copy of the father—eye, nose, lip, the trick of his frown." It is just such a swaggerer as contemporaries have described old Ben to be. Meercraft, Bobadil, the Host of the New Inn, have all his image and superscription. But Mammon is arrogant pretension personified. Sir Samson Legend, in *Love for Love*, is such another lying, overbearing character, but he does not come up to Epicure Mammon. What a "towering bravery" there is in his sensuality! he affects no pleasure under a Sultan. It is as if "Egypt with Assyria strove in luxury."

## GEORGE CHAPMAN.

*Bussy D'Ambois, Byron's Conspiracy, Byron's Tragedy, &c., &c.*—Webster has happily characterized the "full and heightened style" of Chapman, who, of all the English play-writers, perhaps approaches nearest to Shakspere in the descriptive and didactic, in passages which are less purely dramatic. Dramatic imitation was not his talent. He could not go out of himself, as Shakspeare could shift at pleasure, to inform and animate other existences, but in himself he had an eye to perceive and a soul to embrace all forms and modes of being. He would have made a great epic poet, if indeed he has not abundantly shown himself to be one; for his Homer is not so properly a translation as the stories of Achilles and Ulysses re-written. The earnestness and passion which he has put into every part of these poems, would be incredible to a reader of mere modern translations. His almost Greek zeal for the glory of his heroes can only be paralleled by that fierce spirit of Hebrew bigotry, with which Milton, as if personating one of the zealots of the old law, clothed himself when he sat down to paint the acts of Samson against the uncircumcised. The great obstacle to Chapman's translations being read, is their unconquerable quaintness. He pours out in the same breath the most just and natural, and the most violent and crude expressions. He seems to grasp at whatever words come first to hand while the enthusiasm is upon him, as if all others must be inadequate to the divine meaning. But passion (the all-in-all in poetry) is everywhere present, raising the low, dignifying the mean, and putting sense into the absurd. He makes his readers glow, weep, tremble, take any affection which he pleases, be moved by words, or in spite of them, be disgusted and overcome their disgust.

I have often thought that the vulgar misconception of Shakspere, as of a wild irregular genius "in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties," would be really true, applied to Chapman. But there is no scale by which to balance such disproportionate subjects as the faults and beauties of a great genius. To set off the former with any fairness against the latter, the pain which they give us should be in same proportion to the pleasure which we receive from the other. As these transport us to the highest heaven, those should steep us in agonies infernal.

*Bussy D'Ambois.*—This calling upon Light and Darkness for information, but, above all, the description of the Spirit—"Threw his changed countenance

headlong into clouds"—is tremendous, to the curdling of the blood. I know nothing in Poetry like it.

### FRANCIS BEAUMONT.—JOHN FLETCHER.

*Maid's Tragedy.*—One characteristic of the excellent old poets is, their being able to bestow grace upon subjects which naturally do not seem susceptible of any. I will mention two instances. Zelmane in the *Arcadia* of Sidney, and Helena in the *All's Well that End's Well* of Shakspere. What can be more unpromising at first sight, than the idea of a young man disguising himself in woman's attire, and passing himself off for a woman among women; and that for a long space of time? Yet Sir Philip has preserved so matchless a decorum, that neither does Pyrocles' manhood suffer any stain for the effeminacy of Zelmane, nor is the respect due to the princesses at all diminished when the deception comes to be known. In the sweetly constituted mind of Sir Philip Sidney, it seems as if no ugly thought or unhandsome meditation could find a harbour. He turned all that he touched into images of honour and virtue. Helena in Shakspere is a young woman seeking a man in marriage. The ordinary rules of courtship are reversed, the habitual feelings are crossed. Yet with such exquisite address this dangerous subject is handled, that Helena's forwardness loses her no honour; delicacy dispenses with its laws in her favour, and nature, in her single case, seems content to suffer a sweet violation. Aspatia, in the *Maid's Tragedy*, is a character equally difficult, with Helena, of being managed with grace. She too is a slighted woman, refused by the man who had once engaged to marry her. Yet it is artfully contrived, that while we pity we respect her, and she descends without degradation. Such wonders true poetry and passion can do, to confer dignity upon subjects which do not seem capable of it. But Aspatia must not be compared at all points with Helena; she does not so absolutely predominate over her situation but she suffers some diminution, some abatement of the full lustre of her female character, which Helena never does. Her character has many degrees of sweetness, some of delicacy; but it has weakness which, if we do not despise, we are sorry for. After all, Beaumont and Fletcher were but an inferior sort of Shaksperes and Sidneys.

*Philaster.*—The character of Bellario must have been extremely popular in its day. For many years after the date of *Philaster's* first exhibition on the stage, scarce a play can be found without one of these women pages in it, following in the train of some pre-engaged lover, calling on the gods to bless her happy rival (his mistress), whom no doubt she secretly curses in her heart, giving rise to many pretty *equivoques* by the way on the confusion of sex, and either made happy at last by some surprising turn of fate, or dismissed with the joint pity of the lovers and the audience. Donne has a copy of verses to his mistress, dissuading her from a resolution which she seems to have taken up from some of these scenical representations, of following him abroad as a page. It is so earnest, so weighty, so rich in poetry, in sense, in wit, and pathos, that it deserves to be read as a solemn close in future to all such sickly fancies as he there deprecates.

### JOHN FLETCHER.

*Thierry and Theodoret.*—The scene where Ordella offers her life a sacrifice, that the King of France may not be childless, I have always considered as the finest in all Fletcher, and Ordella to be the most perfect notion of the female heroic character, next to Calantha in the *Broken Heart*. She is a piece of sainted nature. Yet noble as the whole passage is, it must be confessed that the manner of it, compared with Shakspere's finest scenes, is faint and languid. Its motion is circular, not progressive. Each line revolves on itself in a sort of

separate orbit. They do not join into one another like a running-hand. Fletcher's ideas moved slow; his versification, though sweet, is tedious, it stops at every turn; he lays line upon line, making up one after the other, adding image to image so deliberately, that we see their junctures. Shakspere mingles everything, runs line into line, embarrasses sentences and metaphors; before one idea has burst its shell, another is hatched and clamours for disclosure. Another striking difference between Fletcher and Shakspere, is the fondness of the former for unnatural and violent situations. He seems to have thought that nothing great could be produced in an ordinary way. The chief incidents in some of his most admired tragedies show this.* Shakspere had nothing of this contortion in his mind, none of that craving after violent situations, and flights of strained and improbable virtue, which I think always betrays an imperfect moral sensibility. The wit of Fletcher is excellent† like his serious scenes, but there is something strained and far-fetched in both. He is too mistrustful of Nature, he always goes a little on one side of her. Shakspere chose her without a reserve: and had riches, power, understanding, and length of days, with her, for a dowry.

*Love's Pilgrimage.*—The dialogue between Philippo and Leocadia is one of the most pleasing if not the most shining scenes in Fletcher. All is sweet, natural, and unforced. It is a copy which we may suppose Massinger to have profited by the studying.

*The Two Noble Kinsmen.*—The scene in which Palamon and Arcite repining at their hard condition, in being made captives for life in Athens, derive consolation from the enjoyment of each other's company in prison, bears indubitable marks of Fletcher: the two which precede it give strong countenance to the tradition that Shakspere had a hand in this play. The same judgment may be formed of the death of Arcite and some other passages, not here given. They have a luxuriance in them which strongly resembles Shakspere's manner in those parts of his plays where, the progress of the interest being subordinate, the poet was at leisure for description. I might fetch instances from Troilus and Timon. That Fletcher should have copied Shakspere's manner through so many entire scenes (which is the theory of Mr. Steevens) is not very probable; that he could have done it with such facility is to me not certain. If Fletcher wrote some scenes in imitation, why did he stop? or shall we say that Shakspere wrote the other scenes in imitation of Fletcher? that he gave Shakspere a curb and a bridle, and that Shakspere gave him a pair of spurs: as Blackmoor and Lucan are brought in exchanging gifts in the *Battle of the Books?*

*Faithful Shepherdess.*—If all the parts of this delightful pastoral had been in unison with its many innocent scenes and sweet lyric intermixtures, it had been a poem fit to vie with Comus or the Arcadia, to have been put into the hands of boys and virgins, to have made matter for young dreams, like the loves of Hermia and Lysander. But a spot is on the face of this Diana. Nothing short of infatuation could have driven Fletcher upon mixing with this "blessedness" such an ugly deformity as Cloe, the wanton shepherdess! Coarse words do but wound the ears: but a character of lewdness affronts the mind. Female lewdness at once shocks nature and morality. If Cloe was meant to set off Clorin by contrast, Fletcher should have known that such weeds by juxtaposition do not set off but kill sweet flowers.

## FRANCIS BEAUMONT.

*The Triumph of Love: Being the second of four plays, or moral representations, in one.*—Violanta, Daughter to a Nobleman of Milan, is with child by

* *Wife for a Month, Cupid's Revenge, Double Marriage,* &c.
† *Wit without Money,* and his comedies generally.

Gerrard, supposed to be of mean descent: an offence which by the laws of Milan is made capital to both parties.

Violanta's prattle is so very pretty and so natural *in her situation*, that I could not resist giving it a place. Juno Lucina was never invoked with more elegance. Pope has been praised for giving dignity to a game of cards. It required at least as much address to ennoble a lying-in.

PHILIP MASSINGER.—THOMAS DEKKER.

*The Virgin Martyr.*—This play has some beauties of so very high an order, that with all my respect for Massinger, I do not think he had poetical enthusiasm capable of rising up to them. His associate Dekker, who wrote *Old Fortunatus*, had poetry enough for anything. The very impurities which obtrude themselves among the sweet pieties of this play, like Satan among the Sons of Heaven, have a strength of contrast, a raciness, and a glow in them, which are beyond Massinger. They are to the religion of the rest what Caliban is to Miranda.

PHILIP MASSINGER.

*The City Madam.*—This bitter satire against the city women for aping the fashions of the court ladies must have been peculiarly gratifying to the females of the Herbert family and the rest of Massinger's noble patrons and patronesses.

*The Picture.*—The good sense, rational fondness, and chastised feeling, of the dialogue in which Matthias, a knight of Bohemia, going to the wars, in parting with his wife, shows her substantial reasons why he should go—make it more valuable than many of those scenes in which this writer has attempted a deeper passion and more tragical interest. Massinger had not the higher requisites of his art in anything like the degree in which they were possessed by Ford, Webster, Tourneur, Heywood, and others. He never shakes or disturbs the mind with grief. He is read with composure and placid delight. He wrote with that equability of all the passions, which made his English style the purest and most free from violent metaphors and harsh constructions, of any of the dramatists who were his contemporaries.

PHILIP MASSINGER.—THOMAS MIDDLETON.—WILLIAM ROWLEY.

*Old Law.*—There is an exquisiteness of moral sensibility, making one's eyes to gush out tears of delight, and a poetical strangeness in the circumstances of this sweet tragi-comedy, which are unlike anything in the dramas which Massinger wrote alone. The pathos is of a subtler edge. Middleton and Rowley, who assisted in it, had both of them finer geniuses than their associate.

JAMES SHIRLEY

Claims a place amongst the worthies of this period, not so much for any transcendent talent in himself, as that he was the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common. A new language, and quite a new turn of tragic and comic interest, came in with the Restoration.

*The Lady of Pleasure.*—The dialogue between Sir Thomas Bornewell and his lady Aretina is in the very spirit of the recriminating scenes between Lord and Lady Townley in the *Provoked Husband.* It is difficult to believe but it must have been Vanburgh's prototype.

# On the Garrick Plays.

(*Hone's Table Book,* 1827–28.)

[The following papers were designed by Charles Lamb as a second series of, or sequel to, the Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets published by the Messrs. Longman and Company. They were contributed to Hone's Table Book in twenty-three instalments as Part I., Part II., &c., under the title of Notes to the Garrick Plays, and may be found ranging over that curious repertory of miscellaneous literature beginning on column 3 and ending on column 1,827. Among the additional MSS. at the British Museum (Nos. 9,955 and 9,956) are preserved extracts from the Garrick Collection of Old Plays in Charles Lamb's handwriting. How thoroughly he enjoyed the luxury of examining that collection in the old reading-room at Montagu House he has made plain to us all in his explanatory letter to the editor of the Table Book with which these critical Notes are introduced.]

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

[*William Hone.*]

DEAR SIR,—It is not unknown to you, that about nineteen years since I published "Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, who lived about the time of Shakspere." For the scarcer Plays I had recourse to the Collection bequeathed to the British Museum by Mr. Garrick. But my time was but short, and my subsequent leisure has discovered in it a treasure rich and exhaustless beyond what I then imagined. In it is to be found almost every production in the shape of a Play that has appeared in print, from the time of the old Mysteries and Moralities to the days of Crowne and D'Urfey. Imagine the luxury to one like me, who, above every other form of Poetry, have ever preferred the Dramatic, of sitting in the princely apartments, for such they are, of poor condemned Montagu House, which I predict will not speedily be followed by a handsomer, and culling at will the flower of some thousand Dramas. It is like having the range of a Nobleman's Library, with the Librarian to your friend. Nothing can exceed the courteousness and attentions of the gentleman who has the chief direction of the Reading-rooms here; and you have scarce to ask for a volume, before it is laid before you. If the occasional extracts which I have been tempted to bring away, may find an appropriate place in your *Table Book,* some of them are weekly at your service. By those who remember the "Specimens," these must be considered as mere after gleanings, supplementary to that work, only comprising a longer period. You must be content with sometimes a scene, sometimes a song; a speech or passage, or a poetical image, as they happen to strike me. I read without order of time; I am a poor hand at dates; and for any biography of the dramatists, I must refer to writers who are more skilful in such matters. My business is with their poetry only.

Your well-wisher,

*January* 27, 1827. C. LAMB.

ROBERT DAVENPORT.

*King John and Matilda: a Tragedy. Acted in* 1651.—[John not being

able to bring Matilda, the chaste daughter of the old Baron Fitzwater, to compliance with his wishes, causes her to be poisoned in a nunnery.

> And thou, Fitzwater, reflect upon thy *name*,*
> And turn the *Son of Tears*.]

This scene has much passion and poetry in it, if I mistake not. The last words of Fitzwater are an instance of noble temperament; but to understand him, the character throughout of this mad, merry, feeling, insensible seeming lord, should be read. That the venomous John could have even counterfeited repentance so well, is out of nature; but, supposing the possibility, nothing is truer than the way in which it is managed. These old play-wrights invested their bad characters with notions of good, which could by no possibility have co-existed with their actions. Without a soul of goodness in himself, how could Shakspere's *Richard the Third* have lit upon those sweet phrases and inducements by which he attempts to win over the dowager queen to let him wed her daughter. It is not nature's nature, but imagination's substituted nature, which does almost as well in a fiction.

### JOHN DAY.

*The Parliament of Bees: a Masque. Printed* 1607.—Whether this singular production, in which the characters are all *Bees*, was ever acted, I have no information to determine. It is at least as capable of representation as we can conceive the "Birds" of Aristophanes to have been.

> ————————The doings,
> The births, the wars, the wooings,

of these pretty little winged creatures are with continued liveliness portrayed throughout the whole of this curious old drama, in words which bees would talk with, could they talk; the very air seems replete with humming and buzzing melodies, while we read them. Surely bees were never so be-rhymed before.

### ABRAHAM COWLEY.

*The Guardian: a Comedy*, 1650.—This was the first draught of that which he published afterwards under the title of the *Cutter of Coleman Street*; and contains the character of a foolish poet, omitted in the latter. The *Cutter* has always appeared to me the link between the comedy of Fletcher and of Congreve. In the elegant passion of the love scenes it approaches the former; and Puny (the character substituted for the omitted poet) is the prototype of the half-witted wits, the Brisks and Dapperwits, of the latter.

### ROBERT YARRINGTON,

*Who wrote in the reign of Elizabeth.*

*Two Tragedies in One.*—It is curious that this old play comprises the distinct action of two atrocities; the one a vulgar murder, committed in our own Thames Street, with the names and incidents truly and historically set down;

[* Fitzwater: son of water. A striking instance of the compatibility of the *serious pun* with the expression of the profoundest sorrows. Grief, as well as joy, finds ease in thus playing with a word. Old John of Gaunt in Shakspere thus descants on his *name*: "Gaunt and gaunt indeed;" to a long string of conceits, which no one has ever yet felt as ridiculous. The poet Wither thus, in a mournful review of the declining estate of his family, says with deepest nature:—

> The very name of Wither shows decay.]

the other a murder in high life, supposed to be acted at the same time in Italy, the scenes alternating between that country and England: the story of the latter is *mutatis mutandis* no other than that of our own *Babes in the Wood*, transferred to Italy, from a delicacy no doubt to some of the family of the rich wicked uncle, who might yet be living. The treatment of the two differs as the romance-like narratives in *God's Revenge against Murder*, in which the actors of the murders (with the trifling exception that they *were murderers*) are represented as most accomplished and every way amiable young gentlefolks of either sex—as much as *that* differs from the honest unglossing pages of the homely Newgate Ordinary.

### GEORGE PEELE.

*The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe, with the Tragedy of Absalom.*—Bethsabe, with her maid, bathing. She sings: and David sits above viewing her. There is more of the same stuff, but I suppose the reader has a surfeit; especially as this Canticle of David has never been suspected to contain any pious sense couched underneath it, whatever his son's may. The kingly bower "seated in hearing of a hundred streams," is the best of it.

### SONG IN GEORGE PEELE'S DRAMATIC PASTORAL "THE ARRAIGNMENT OF PARIS," 1584.

*To my esteemed friend, and excellent musician, V[incent] N[ovello], Esq.*

Dear Sir,—I conjure you in the name of all the Sylvan deities, and of the Muses, whom you honour, and they reciprocally love and honour you,—rescue this old and passionate *ditty*—the very flower of an old *forgotten pastoral*, which had it been in all parts equal, the *Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher had been but a second name in this sort of writing —— rescue it from the profane hands of every common composer: and in one of your tranquillest moods, when you have most leisure from those sad thoughts, which sometimes unworthily beset you; yet a mood, in itself not unallied to the better sort of melancholy; laying by for once the lofty organ, with which you shake the Temples: attune, as to the pipe of Paris himself, some milder and more love-according instrument, this pretty courtship between Paris and his (then-not-as-yet-forsaken) Œnone. Oblige me, and all more knowing judges of music and of poesy, by the adaptation of fit musical numbers, which it only wants to be the rarest love dialogue in our language.

Your implorer,

C. L.

*Tancred and Gismund: acted before the Court by the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple*, 1591.—Nearly a century after the date of this drama, Dryden produced his admirable version of the same story from *Boccaccio*. The speech here extracted may be compared with the corresponding passage in the *Sigismonda and Guiscardo*, with no disadvantage to the elder performance. It is quite as weighty, as pointed, and as passionate.

*The Battle of Alcazar: a Tragedy*, 1594.—Muly Mahamet, driven from his throne into a desert, robs the lioness to feed his fainting wife Calipolis.

*Muly.* Hold thee, Calipolis; feed and faint no more, &c.

This address, for its barbaric splendour of conception, extravagant vein of promise, not to mention some idiomatic peculiarities, and the very structure of the verse, savours strongly of Marlowe; but the real author, I believe, is unknown.

## HENRY PORTER.

*The Two Angry Women of Abingdon: a Comedy*, 1599.—This pleasant comedy is contemporary with some of the earliest of Shakspere's, and is no wit inferior to either the *Comedy of Errors*, or the *Taming of the Shrew*, for instance. It is full of business, humour, and merry malice. Its night-scenes are peculiarly sprightly and wakeful. The versification unencumbered, and rich with compound epithets. Why do we go on with ever new editions of Ford, and Massinger, and the thrice reprinted Selections of Dodsley? What we want is as many volumes more, as these latter consist of, filled with plays (such as this), of which we know comparatively nothing. Not a third part of the treasures of old English dramatic literature has been exhausted. Are we afraid that the genius of Shakspere would suffer in our estimate by the disclosure? He would indeed be somewhat lessened as a miracle and a prodigy. But he would lose no height by the confession. When a giant is shown to us, does it detract from the curiosity to be told that he has at home a gigantic brood of brethren, less only than himself? Along *with* him, not *from* him, sprang up the race of mighty dramatists, who, compared with the Otways and Rowes that followed, were as Miltons to a Young or an Akenside. That he was their elder brother, not their parent, is evident from the fact of the very few direct imitations of him to be found in their writings. Webster, Dekker, Heywood, and the rest of his great contemporaries went on their own ways, and followed their individual impulses, not blindly prescribing to themselves his tract. Marlowe, the true (though imperfect) father of our *tragedy*, preceded him. The *comedy* of Fletcher is essentially unlike to that of his. 'Tis out of no detracting spirit that I speak thus, for the plays of Shakspere have been the strongest and the sweetest food of my mind from infancy; but I resent the comparative obscurity in which some of his most valuable co-operators remain, who were his dear intimates, his stage and his chamber-fellows while he lived, and to whom his gentle spirit doubtlessly then awarded the full portion of their genius, as from them toward himself appears to have been no grudging of his acknowledged excellence.

## SIR RICHARD FANSHAW'S

*Translation of "Querer por Sola Querer"—"To Love for Love's Sake:" a Romantic Drama, written in Spanish by Mendoza*, 1649.—[Felisbravo, Prince of Persia, from a picture sent him of the brave Amazonian Queen of Tartary, Zelidaura, becoming enamoured, sets out for that realm; in his way thither disenchants a Queen of Araby; but first, overcome by fatigue, falls asleep in the enchanted grove, where Zelidaura herself coming by, steals the picture from him. The passion of the romance arises from his remorse at being taken so negligent; and her disdain that he should sleep, having the company of her picture. She here plays upon him, who does not yet know her, in the disguise of a Rustic.]

To my taste this is fine, elegant, queen-like raillery; a second part of *Love's Labour Lost*, to which title this extraordinary play has still better pretensions than even Shakspere's; for after leading three pair of royal lovers through endless mazes of doubts, difficulties; oppositions of dead fathers' wills; a labyrinth of losings and findings; jealousies; enchantments; conflicts with giants, and single-handed against armies; to the exact state in which all the lovers might with the greatest propriety indulge their reciprocal wishes—when, the deuce is in it, you think, but they must all be married now—suddenly the three ladies turn upon their lovers: and, as an exemplification of the moral of the play, "Loving for Loving's sake," and a hyperplatonic, truly Spanish proof of

their affections—demand that the lovers shall consent to their mistresses' taking upon them the vow of a single life! to which the gallants, with becoming refinement, can do no less than consent.—The fact is that it was a court play, in which the characters—males, giants, and all—were played by females, and those of the highest order of Grandeeship. No nobleman might be permitted amongst them; and it was against the forms, that a great court lady of Spain should consent to such an unrefined motion, as that of wedlock, though but in a play.

Appended to the drama, the length of which may be judged from its having taken nine days in the representation, and me three hours in the reading of it —hours well wasted—is a poetical account of a fire, which broke out in the theatre on one of the nights of its acting, when the whole of the *dramatis personæ* were nearly burnt, because the common people out of "base fear," and the nobles out of "pure respect," could not think of laying hands upon such "Great Donnas;" till the young king, breaking the etiquette, by snatching up his queen, and bearing her through the flames upon his back, the grandees (dilatory Æneases), followed his example, and each saved one (Anchises-fashion), till the whole courtly company of comedians were got off in tolerable safety.--Imagine three or four stout London firemen, on such an occasion, standing off in mere respect.

### THOMAS SACKVILLE, LORD BUCKHURST, AFTERWARDS EARL OF DORSET; AND THOMAS NORTON.

*Gorboduc; a Tragedy.*—The style of this old play is stiff and cumbersome, like the dresses of its times. There may be flesh and blood underneath, but we cannot get at it. Sir Philip Sidney has praised it for its morality. One of its authors might easily furnish that. Norton was an associate to Hopkins, Sternhold, and Robert Wisdom, in the singing psalms. I am willing to believe that Lord Buckhurst supplied the more vital parts. The chief beauty in the extract is of a secret nature. Marcella obscurely intimates that the murdered prince Porrex and she had been lovers.

### THOMAS KYD.

*The Spanish Tragedy; or Hieronimo is mad again: a Tragedy.*—These scenes [of Hieronimo's madness], which are the very salt of the play (which without them is but a *caput mortuum*, such another piece of flatness as Locrine), Hawkins, in his re-publication of this tragedy, has thrust out of the text into the notes; as omitted in the second Edition, "printed for Ed. Allde, amended of such gross blunders as passed in the first:" and thinks them to have been *foisted in by the players.*—A late discovery at Dulwich College has ascertained that two sundry payments were made to Ben Jonson by the theatre for furnishing additions to Hieronimo. There is nothing in the undoubted plays of Jonson which would authorize us to suppose that he could have supplied the scenes in question. I should suspect the agency of some "more potent spirit." Webster might have furnished them. They are full of that wild solemn preternatural cast of grief which bewilders us in the *Duchess of Malfy.*

# On the Genius and Character of Hogarth.

(*The Reflector*, No. III., art. viii. 1811.)

[In its original issue this masterly criticism bore under its heading, as a sort of sub-title, the words "With some remarks on a passage in the writings of the late Mr. Barry." The signature affixed to the paper was "L."]

ONE of the earliest and noblest enjoyments I had when a boy was in the contemplation of those capital prints by Hogarth, the *Harlot's and Rake's Progresses*, which, along with some others, hung upon the walls of a great hall, in an old-fashioned house in ——shire, and seemed the solitary tenants (with myself) of that antiquated and life-deserted apartment.

Recollection of the manner in which those prints used to affect me, has often made me wonder, when I have heard Hogarth described as a mere comic painter, as one whose chief ambition was to *raise a laugh*. To deny that there are throughout the prints which I have mentioned circumstances introduced of a laughable tendency, would be to run counter to the common notions of mankind; but to suppose that in their *ruling character* they appeal chiefly to the risible faculty, and not first and foremost to the very heart of man, its best and most serious feelings, would be to mistake no less grossly their aim and purpose. A set of severer Satires (for they are not so much Comedies, which they have been likened to, as they are strong and masculine Satires) less mingled with anything of mere fun, were never written upon paper, or graven upon copper. They resemble Juvenal, or the satiric touches in *Timon of Athens*.

I was pleased with the reply of a gentleman, who being asked which book he esteemed most in his library, answered,—"Shakspere:" being asked which he esteemed next best, replied,—"Hogarth." His graphic representations are indeed books: they have the teeming, fruitful, suggestive meaning of *words*. Other pictures we look at,—his prints we read.

In pursuance of this parallel, I have sometimes entertained myself with comparing the *Timon of Athens* of Shakspere (which I have just mentioned) and Hogarth's *Rake's Progress* together. The story, the moral, in both is nearly the same. The wild course of riot and extravagance, ending in the one with driving the Prodigal from the society of men into the solitude of the deserts, and in the other with conducting the Rake through his several stages of dissipation into the still more complete desolations of the mad-house, in the play and in the picture are described with almost equal force and nature. The levée of the Rake, which forms the subject of the second plate in the series, is almost a transcript of Timon's levée in the opening scene of that play. We find a dedicating poet, and other similar characters in both.

The concluding scene in the *Rake's Progress* is perhaps superior to the last scenes of *Timon*. If we seek for something of kindred excellence in poetry, it must be in the scenes of Lear's beginning madness, where the King and the Fool and the Tom-o'-Bedlam conspire to produce such a medley of mirth checked by misery, and misery rebuked by mirth; where the society of those "strange bed-fellows" which misfortunes have brought Lear acquainted with, so finely sets forth the destitute state of the monarch, while the lunatic bans of the one, and the disjointed sayings and wild but pregnant allusions of the other, so wonderfully sympathize with that confusion, which they seem to assist in the production of, in the senses of that "child-changed father."

In the scene in Bedlam, which terminates the *Rake's Progress*, we find the same assortment of the ludicrous with the terrible. Here is desperate madness, the overturning of originally strong thinking faculties, at which we shudder, as we contemplate the duration and pressure of affliction which it must have asked to destroy such a building;—and here is the gradual hurtless lapse into idiocy, of faculties which at their best of times never having been strong, we look upon the consummation of their decay with no more of pity than is consistent with a smile. The mad tailor, the poor driveller, that has gone out of his wits (and truly he appears to have had no great journey to go to get past their confines) for the love of *Charming Betty Careless*,—these half-laughable, scarce-pitiable objects take off from the horror which the principal figure would of itself raise, at the same time that they assist the feeling of the scene by contributing to the general notion of its subject.

Is it carrying the spirit of comparison to excess to remark, that in the poor kneeling weeping female, who accompanies her seducer in his sad decay, there is something analogous to Kent or Caius, as he delights rather to be called, in *Lear*,—the noblest pattern of virtue which even Shakspere has conceived,—who follows his royal master in banishment that had pronounced *his* banishment, and forgetful at once of his wrongs and dignities, taking on himself the disguise of a menial, retains his fidelity to the figure, his loyalty to the carcase, the shadow, the shell and empty husk of Lear.

In the perusal of a book, or of a picture, much of the impression which we receive depends upon the habit of mind which we bring with us to such perusal. The same circumstance may make one person laugh, which shall render another very serious; or in the same person the first impression may be corrected by after-thought. The misemployed incongruous characters of the *Harlot's Funeral*, on a superficial inspection, provoke to laughter; but when we have sacrificed the first emotion to levity, a very different frame of mind succeeds, or the painter has lost half his purpose. I never look at that wonderful assemblage of depraved beings, who, without a grain of reverence or pity in their perverted minds, are performing the sacred exteriors of duty to the relics of their departed partner in folly, but I am as much moved to sympathy from the very want of it in them, as I should be by the finest representation of a virtuous death-bed surrounded by real mourners, pious children, weeping friends,—perhaps more by the very contrast. What reflections does it not awake, of the dreadful heartless state in which the creature (a female, too) must have lived, who in death wants the accompaniment of one genuine tear. That wretch who is removing the lid of the coffin to gaze upon the corpse with a face which indicates a perfect negation of all goodness or womanhood—the hypocrite parson and his demure partner—all the fiendish group—to a thoughtful mind present a moral emblem more affecting than if the poor friendless carcase had been depicted as thrown out to the woods, where wolves had assisted at its obsequies; itself furnishing forth its own funeral banquet.

It is easy to laugh at such incongruities as are met together in this picture,—incongruous objects being of the very essence of laughter,—but surely the laugh is far different in its kind from that thoughtless species to which we are moved by mere farce and grotesque. We laugh when Ferdinand Count Fathom, at the first sight of the white cliffs of Britain, feels his heart yearn with filial fondness towards the land of his progenitors, which he is coming to fleece and plunder,—we smile at the exquisite irony of the passage,—but if we are not led on by such passages to some more salutary feeling than laughter, we are very negligent perusers of them in book or picture.

It is the fashion with those who cry up the great Historical School in this country, at the head of which Sir Joshua Reynolds is placed, to exclude Hogarth from that school, as an artist of an inferior and vulgar class. Those persons seem to me to confound the painting of subjects in common or

vulgar life with the being a vulgar artist. The quantity of thought which Hogarth crowds into every picture, would alone *unvulgarize* every subject which he might choose. Let us take the lowest of his subjects, the print called *Gin Lane.* Here is plenty of poverty and low stuff to disgust upon a superficial view; and accordingly, a cold spectator feels himself immediately disgusted and repelled. I have seen many turn away from it, not being able to bear it. The same persons would perhaps have looked with great complacency upon Poussin's celebrated picture of the *Plague of Athens.** Disease and Death and bewildering Terror, in *Athenian garments* are endurable, and come, as the delicate critics express it, within the "limits of pleasurable sensation." But the scenes of their own St. Giles's, delineated by their own countryman, are too shocking to think of. Yet if we could abstract our minds from the fascinating colours of the picture, and forget the coarse execution (in some respects) of the print, intended as it was to be a cheap plate, accessible to the poorer sort of people, for whose instruction it was done, I think we could have no hesitation in conferring the palm of superior genius upon Hogarth, comparing this work of his with Poussin's picture. There is more of imagination in it—that power which draws all things to one,—which makes things animate and inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects and their accessaries, take one colour, and serve to one effect. Everything in the print, to use a vulgar expression, *tells.* Every part is full of "strange images of death." It is perfectly amazing and astounding to look at. Not only the two prominent figures, the woman and the half-dead man, which are as terrible as anything which Michael Angelo ever drew, but everything else in the print contributes to bewilder and stupefy,—the very houses, as I heard a friend of mine express it, tumbling all about in various directions, seem drunk—seem absolutely reeling from the effect of that diabolical spirit of frenzy which goes forth over the whole composition.—To show the poetical and almost prophetical conception in the artist, one little circumstance may serve. Not content with the dying and dead figures, which he has strewed in profusion over the proper scene of the action, he shows you what (of a kindred nature) is passing beyond it. Close by the shell, in which, by direction of the parish beadle, a man is depositing his wife, is an old wall, which, partaking of the universal decay around it, is tumbling to pieces. Through a gap in this wall are seen three figures, which appear to make a part in some funeral procession which is passing by the other side of the wall, out of the sphere of the composition. This extending of the interest beyond the bounds of the subject could only have been conceived by a great genius. Shakspere, in his description of the painting of the Trojan War, in his *Tarquin and Lucrece,* has introduced a similar device, where the painter made a part stand for the whole :—

> For much imaginary work was there,
> Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,
> That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
> Griped in an armed hand ; himself behind
> Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind :
> A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head,
> Stood for the whole to be imagined.

This he well calls *imaginary work,* where the spectator must meet the artist in his conceptions half way ; and it is peculiar to the confidence of high genius alone to trust so much to spectators or readers. Lesser artists show everything distinct and full, as they require an object to be made out to themselves before they can comprehend it.

When I think of the power displayed in this (I will not hesitate to say) sublime print, it seems to me the extreme narrowness of system alone, and of that

* At the late Mr. Hope's, in Cavendish Square.

rage for classification, by which in matters of taste at least, we are perpetually perplexing instead of arranging our ideas, that would make us concede to the work of Poussin above-mentioned, and deny to this of Hogarth, the name of a grand serious composition.

We are for ever deceiving ourselves with names and theories. We call one man a great historical painter, because he has taken for his subjects kings or great men, or transactions over which time has thrown a grandeur. We term another the painter of common life, and set him down in our minds for an artist of an inferior class, without reflecting whether the quantity of thought shown by the latter may not much more than level the distinction which their mere choice of subjects may seem to place between them; or whether, in fact, from that very common life a great artist may not extract as deep an interest as another man from that which we are pleased to call history.

I entertain the highest respect for the talents and virtues of Reynolds, but I do not like that his reputation should overshadow and stifle the merits of such a man as Hogarth, nor that to mere names and classifications we should be content to sacrifice one of the greatest ornaments of England.

I would ask the most enthusiastic admirer of Reynolds, whether in the countenances of his *Staring* and *Grinning Despair*, which he has given us for the faces of Ugolino and dying Beaufort, there be anything comparable to the expression which Hogarth has put into the face of his broken-down rake in the last plate but one of the *Rake's Progress*,* where a letter from the manager is brought to him to say that his play "will not do?" Here all is easy, natural, undistorted, but withal what a mass of woe is here accumulated! —the long history of a mis-spent life is compressed into the countenance as plainly as the series of plates before had told it; here is no attempt at Gorgonian looks which are to freeze the beholder, no grinning at the antique bed-posts, no face-making, or consciousness of the presence of spectators in or out of the picture, but grief kept to a man's self, a face retiring from notice with the shame which great anguish sometimes brings with it,—a final leave taken of hope,—the coming on of vacancy and stupefaction,—a beginning alienation of mind looking like tranquillity. Here is matter for the mind of the beholder to feed on for the hour together,—matter to feed and fertilize the mind. It is too real to admit one thought about the power of the artist who did it.—When we compare the expression in subjects which so fairly admit of comparison, and find the superiority so clearly to remain with Hogarth, shall the mere contemptible difference of the scene of it being laid in the one case in our Fleet or King's Bench Prison, and in the other in the State Prison of Pisa, or the bedroom of a cardinal,—or that the subject of the one has never been authenticated, and the other is matter of history,—so weigh down the real points of the comparison, as to induce us to rank the artist who has chosen the one scene or subject (though confessedly inferior in that which constitutes the soul of his art) in a class from which we exclude the better genius (who has happened to make choice of the other) with something like disgrace?

* The first perhaps in all Hogarth for serious expression. That which comes next to it, I think, is the jaded morning countenance of the debauchee in the second plate of the *Marriage à-la-mode*, which lectures on the vanity of pleasure as audibly as anything in Ecclesiastes.

† Sir Joshua Reynolds, somewhere in his lectures, speaks of the *presumption* of Hogarth in attempting the grand style in painting, by which he means his choice of certain Scripture subjects. Hogarth's excursions into Holy Land were not very numerous, but what he has left us in this kind have at least this merit, that they have expression of *some sort or other* in them,—the *Child Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter*, for instance: which is more than can be said of Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Repose in Egypt*, painted for Macklin's Bible, where for a Madonna he has substituted a sleepy, insensible, unmotherly girl, one so little worthy to have been selected as the Mother of the Saviour, that she seems to have neither heart nor feeling to entitle her to become a mother at all. But

*The Boys under Demoniacal Possession* of Raphael and Dominichino, by what law of classification are we bound to assign them to belong to the great style in painting, and to degrade into an inferior class the Rake of Hogarth when he is the Madman in the Bedlam scene? I am sure he is far more impressive than either. It is a face which no one that has seen can easily forget. There is the stretch of human suffering to the utmost endurance, severe bodily pain brought on by strong mental agony, the frightful obstinate laugh of madness,—yet all so unforced and natural, that those who never were witness to madness in real life, think they see nothing but what is familiar to them in this face. Here are no tricks of distortion, nothing but the natural face of agony. This is high tragic painting, and we might as well deny to Shakspere the honours of a great tragedian, because he has interwoven scenes of mirth with the serious business of his plays, as refuse to Hogarth the same praise for the two concluding scenes of the *Rake's Progress*, because of the Comic Lunatics which he has thrown into the one, or the Alchymist that he has introduced in the other, who is paddling in the coals of his furnace, keeping alive the flames of vain hope within the very walls of the prison to which the vanity has conducted him, which have taught the darker lesson of extinguished hope to the desponding figure who is the principal person of the scene.

It is the force of these kindly admixtures, which assimilates the scenes of Hogarth and of Shakspere to the drama of real life, where no such thing as pure tragedy is to be found; but merriment and infelicity, ponderous crime and feather-light vanity, like twi-formed births, disagreeing complexions of one intertexture, perpetually unite to show forth motley spectacles to the world. Then it is that the poet or painter shows his art, when in the selection of these comic adjuncts he chooses such circumstances as shall relieve, contrast with or fall into, without forming a violent opposition to, his principal object. Who sees not that the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, the Fool in *Lear*, have a kind of correspondency to, and fall in with, the subjects which they seem to interrupt, while the comic stuff in *Venice Preserved*, and the doggerel nonsense of the Cook and his poisoning associates in the *Rollo* of Beaumont and Fletcher, are pure, irrelevant, impertinent discords,—as bad as the quarrelling dog and cat under the table of the *Lord and the Disciples at Emmaus* of Titian.

Not to tire the reader with perpetual reference to prints which he may not be fortunate enough to possess, it may be sufficient to remark, that the same tragic cast of expression and incident, blended in some instances with a greater alloy of comedy, characterizes his other great work, the *Marriage à-la-mode*, as well as those less elaborate exertions of his genius, the prints called *Industry* and *Idleness*, the *Distressed Poet*, &c., forming, with the *Harlot's* and *Rake's Progresses*, the most considerable if not the largest class of his productions,—enough surely to rescue Hogarth from the imputation of being a mere buffoon, or one whose general aim was only to *shake the sides*.

There remains a very numerous class of his performances, the object of which must be confessed to be principally comic. But in all of them will be found something to distinguish them from the droll productions of Bunbury and others. They have this difference, that we do not merely laugh at, we are led into long trains of reflections by them. In this respect they resemble the characters of Chaucer's *Pilgrims*, which have strokes of humour in them enough to designate them for the most part as comic, but our strongest feeling still is wonder

indeed the race of Virgin Mary painters seems to have been cut up, root and branch, at the Reformation. Our artists are too good Protestants to give life to that admirable commixture of maternal tenderness, with reverential awe and wonder approaching to worship, with which the Virgin Mothers of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael (themselves by their divine countenances inviting men to worship) contemplate the union of the two natures in the person of their Heaven-born Infant.

at the comprehensiveness of genius which could crowd, as poet and painter have done, into one small canvas so many diverse yet co-operating materials.

The faces of Hogarth have not a mere momentary interest, as in caricatures, or those grotesque physiognomies which we sometimes catch a glance of in the street, and, struck with their whimsicality, wish for a pencil and the power to sketch them down; and forget them again as rapidly,—but they are permanent abiding ideas. Not the sports of nature, but her necessary eternal classes. We feel that we cannot part with any of them, lest a link should be broken.

It is worthy of observation, that he has seldom drawn a mean or insignificant countenance*. Hogarth's mind was eminently reflective; and, as it has been well observed of Shakspere, that he has transfused his own poetical character into the persons of his drama (they are all more or less *poets*), Hogarth has impressed a *thinking character* upon the persons of his canvas. This remark must not be taken universally. The exquisite idiotism of the little gentleman in the bag and sword beating his drum in the print of the *Enraged Musician*, would of itself rise up against so sweeping an assertion. But I think it will be found to be true of the generality of his countenances. The knife-grinder and Jew flute-player in the plate just mentioned may serve as instances instead of a thousand. They have intense thinking faces, though the purpose to which they are subservient by no means required it; but indeed it seems as if it was painful to Hogarth to contemplate mere vacancy or insignificance.

This reflection of the artist's own intellect from the faces of his characters, is one reason why the works of Hogarth, so much more than those of any other artist, are objects of meditation. Our intellectual natures love the mirror which gives them back their own likenesses. The mental eye will not bend long with delight upon vacancy.

Another line of eternal separation between Hogarth and the common painters of droll or burlesque subjects, with whom he is often confounded, is the sense of beauty, which in the most unpromising subjects seems never wholly to have deserted him. "Hogarth himself," says Mr. Coleridge,† from whom I have borrowed this observation, speaking of a scene which took place at Ratzeburg "never drew a more ludicrous distortion, both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effect occasioned: nor was there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet, so often and so gladly introduces as the central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius) neither acts nor is meant to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter: and thus prevents the instinctive merriment at the whims of nature, or the foibles or humours of our fellow-men, from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred. To the beautiful females in Hogarth, which Mr. C. has pointed out, might be added the frequent introduction of children (which Hogarth seems to have taken a particular delight in) into his pieces. They have a singular effect in giving tranquillity and a portion of their own innocence to the subject. The baby riding in its mother's lap in the *March to Finchley* (its careless innocent face placed directly behind the intriguing time-furrowed countenance of the treason-plotting French priest), perfectly sobers

* If there are any of that description, they are in his *Strolling Players*, a print which has been cried up by Lord Orford as the richest of his productions, and it may be, for what I know, in the mere lumber, the properties, and dead furniture of the scene, but in living character and expression it is (for Hogarth) lamentably poor and wanting; it is perhaps the only one of his performances at which we have a right to feel disgusted.

† *The Friend*, No. xvi.

the whole of that tumultuous scene. The boy-mourner winding up his top with so much unpretended insensibility in the plate of the *Harlot's Funeral* (the only thing in that assembly that is not a hypocrite), quiets and soothes the mind that has been disturbed at the sight of so much depraved man and woman kind.

I had written thus far, when I met with a passage in the writings of the late Mr Barry, which, as it falls in with the *vulgar notion* respecting Hogarth, which this Essay has been employed in combating, I shall take the liberty to transcribe, with such remarks as may suggest themselves to me in the transcription; referring the reader for a full answer to that which has gone before.

"Notwithstanding Hogarth's merit does undoubtedly entitle him to an honourable place among the artists, and that his little compositions, considered as so many dramatic representations, abounding with humour, character, and extensive observations on the various incidents of low, faulty, and vicious life, are very ingeniously brought together, and frequently tell their own story with more facility than is often found in many of the elevated and more noble inventions of Rafaelle, and other great men; yet it must be honestly confessed, that, in what is called knowledge of the figure, foreigners have justly observed, that Hogarth is often so raw and unformed, as hardly to deserve the name of an artist. But this capital defect is not often perceivable, as examples of the naked and of elevated nature but rarely occur in his subjects, which are for the most part filled with characters, that in their nature tend to deformity; besides, his figures are small, and the junctures, and other difficulties of drawing that might occur in their limbs, are artfully concealed with their clothes, rags, &c. But what would atone for all his defects, even if they were twice told, is his admirable fund of invention, ever inexhaustible in its resources; and his satire, which is always sharp and pertinent, and often highly moral, was (except in a few instances, where he weakly and meanly suffered his integrity to give way to his envy) seldom or never employed in a dishonest or unmanly way. Hogarth has been often imitated in his satirical vein, sometimes in his humorous, but very few have attempted to rival him in his moral walk. The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny, is quite distinct from that of Hogarth, and is of a much more delicate and superior relish; he attempts the heart, and reaches it, whilst Hogarth's general aim is only to shake the sides; in other respects no comparison can be thought of, as Mr. Penny has all that knowledge of the figure and academical skill, which the other wanted. As to Mr. Bunbury, who had so happily succeeded in the vein of humour and caricature, he has for some time past altogether relinquished it, for the more amiable pursuit of beautiful nature: this, indeed, is not to be wondered at, when we recollect that he has, in Mrs. Bunbury, so admirable an exemplar of the most finished grace and beauty continually at his elbow. But (to say all that occurs to me on this subject) perhaps it may be reasonably doubted, whether the being much conversant with Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice, in many of his works, is not rather a dangerous, or, at least, a worthless pursuit; which, if it does not find a false relish and a love of and search after satire and buffoonery in the spectator, is, at least, not unlikely to give him one. Life is short: and the little leisure of it is much better laid out upon that species of art which is employed about the amiable and the admirable, as it is more likely to be attended with better and nobler consequences to ourselves. These two pursuits in art may be compared with two sets of people with whom we might associate; if we give ourselves up to the Footes, the Kenricks, &c., we shall be continually busied and paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious in life; whereas there are those to be found with whom we should be in the constant pursuit and study of all that gives a value and a dignity to human nature." [Account of a series of pictures in the Great Room of the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce,

at the Adelphi, by James Barry, R.A., Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy; reprinted in the last quarto edition of his Works.]

"—— it must be honestly confessed, that in what is called knowledge of the figure foreigners have justly observed," &c.

It is a secret well-known to the professors of the art and mystery of criticism, to insist upon what they do not find in a man's works, and to pass over in silence what they do. That Hogarth did not draw the naked figure so well as Michael Angelo, might be allowed; especially as "examples of the naked," as Mr. Barry acknowledges, "rarely (he might almost have said never) occur in his subjects;" and that his figures under their draperies do not discover all the fine graces of an Antinous or an Apollo, may be conceded likewise; perhaps it was more suitable to his purpose to represent the average forms of mankind in the mediocrity (as Mr. Burke expresses it) of the age in which he lived: but that his figures in general, and in his best subjects, are so glaringly incorrect as is here insinuated, I dare trust my own eye so far as positively to deny the fact. And there is one part of the figure in which Hogarth is allowed to have excelled, which these foreigners seem to have overlooked, or perhaps calculating from its proportion to the whole (a seven or an eighth, I forget which) deemed it of trifling importance; I mean the human face; a small part, reckoning by geographical inches, in the map of man's body, but here it is that the painter of expression must condense the wonders of his skill, even at the expense of neglecting the "junctures and other difficulties of drawing in the limbs," which it must be a cold eye that in the interest so strongly demanded by Hogarth's countenances has leisure to survey and censure.

"The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny."

The first impression caused in me by reading this passage, was an eager desire to know who this Mr. Penny was. This great surpasser of Hogarth, in the "delicacy of his relish," and the "line which he pursued," where is he, what are his works, what has he to show? In vain I tried to recollect, till by happily putting the question to a friend who is more conversant in the works of the illustrious obscure than myself, I learnt that he was the painter of a *Death of Wolfe* which missed the prize the year that the celebrated picture of West on the same subject obtained it; that he also made a picture of the *Marquis of Granby relieving a Sick Soldier;* moreover, that he was the inventor of two pictures of *Suspended and Restored Animation,* which I now remember to have seen in the Exhibition some years since, and the prints from which are still extant in good men's houses. This then, I suppose, is the line of subjects in which Mr. Penny was so much superior to Hogarth. I confess I am not of that opinion. The relieving of poverty by the purse, and the restoring a young man to his parents by using the methods prescribed by the Humane Society, are doubtless very amiable subjects, pretty things to touch the first rudiments of humanity; they amount to about as much instruction as the stories of good boys that give away their custards to poor beggar-boys in children's books. But, good God! is this *milk for babes* to be set up in opposition to Hogarth's moral scenes, his *strong meat for men?* As well might we prefer the fulsome verses upon their own goodness, to which the gentlemen of the Literary Fund annually sit still with such shameless patience to listen, to the satires of Juvenal and Persius: because the former are full of tender images of Worth relieved by Charity, and Charity stretching out her hand to rescue sinking Genius, and the theme of the latter is men's crimes and follies with their black consequences—forgetful meanwhile of those strains of moral pathos, those sublime heart-touches, which these poets (in *them* chiefly showing themselves poets) are perpetually darting across the otherwise appalling gloom of their subject—consolatory remembrancers, when their pictures of guilty mankind have made us even to despair for our species, that there is such a thing as virtue and moral

dignity in the world, that her unquenchable spark is not utterly out—refreshing admonitions, to which we turn for shelter from the too great heat and asperity of the general satire.

And is there nothing analogous to this in Hogarth? nothing which "attempts and reaches the heart?"—no aim beyond that of "shaking the sides?"—If the kneeling ministering female in the last scene of the *Rake's Progress*, the Bedlam scene, of which I have spoken before, and have dared almost to parallel it with the most absolute idea of Virtue which Shakspere has left us, be not enough to disprove the assertion; if the sad endings of the Harlot and the Rake, the passionate heart-bleeding entreaties for forgiveness which the adulterous wife is pouring forth to her assassinated and dying lord in the last scene but one of the *Marriage à-la-mode*,—if these be not things to touch the heart, and dispose the mind to a meditative tenderness: is there nothing sweetly conciliatory in the mild, patient face and gesture with which the wife seems to allay and ventilate the feverish irritated feelings of her poor poverty-distracted mate (the true copy of the *genus irritabile* in the print of the *Distressed Poet?* or if an image of maternal love be required, where shall we find a sublimer view of it than in that aged woman in *Industry and Idleness* (plate v.) who is clinging with the fondness of hope not quite extinguished to her brutal vice-hardened child, whom she is accompanying to the ship which is to bear him away from his native soil, of which he has been adjudged unworthy; in whose shocking face every trace of the human countenance seems obliterated, and a brute beast's to be left instead, shocking and repulsive to all but her who watched over it in its cradle before it was so sadly altered, and feels it must belong to her while a pulse by the vindictive laws of his country shall be suffered to continue to beat in it. Compared with such things, what is Mr. Penny's "knowledge of the figure and academical skill which Hogarth wanted?"

With respect to what follows concerning another gentleman, with the congratulations to him on his escape out of the regions of "humour and caricature," in which it appears he was in danger of travelling side by side with Hogarth, I can only congratulate my country, that Mrs. Hogarth knew *her* province better than by disturbing her husband at his palette to divert him from that universality of subject, which has stamped him perhaps, next to Shakspere, the most inventive genius which this island has produced, into the "amiable pursuit of beautiful nature," *i.e.*, copying *ad infinitum* the individual charms and graces of Mrs. H——.

> "Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice,
> Paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious."

A person unacquainted with the works thus stigmatized, would be apt to imagine, that in Hogarth there was nothing else to be found but subjects of the coarsest and most repulsive nature; that his imagination was naturally unsweet, and that he delighted in raking into every species of moral filth; that he preyed upon sore places only, and took a pleasure in exposing the unsound and rotten parts of human nature. Whereas, with the exception of some of the plates of the *Harlot's Progress*, which are harder in their character than any of the rest of his productions (the *Stages of Cruelty* I omit as mere worthless caricatures, foreign to his general habits, the offspring of his fancy in some wayward humour), there is scarce one of his pieces where vice is most strongly satirized, in which some figure is not introduced upon which the moral eye may rest satisfied; a face that indicates goodness, or perhaps mere good-humouredness and carelessness of mind (negation of evil) only, yet enough to give a relaxation to the frowning brow of satire, and keep the general air from tainting. Take the mild supplicating posture of patient poverty in the poor woman that

is persuading the pawnbroker to accept her clothes in pledge, in the plate of *Gin Lane*, for an instance. A little does it, a little of the *good* nature overpowers a world of *bad*. One cordial honest laugh of a Tom Jones absolutely clears the atmosphere that was reeking with the black putrefying breathings of a hypocrite Blifil. One homely expostulating shrug from Strap, warms the whole air which the suggestions of a gentlemanly ingratitude from his friend Random had begun to freeze. One "Lord bless us!" of Parson Adams upon the wickedness of the times, exorcises and purges off the mass of iniquity which the world-knowledge of even a Fielding could cull out and rake together. But of the severer class of Hogarth's performances, enough, I trust, has been said to show that they do not merely shock and repulse; that there is in them the "scorn of vice" and the "pity" too; something to touch the heart, and keep alive the sense of moral beauty; the "lacrymæ rerum," and the sorrowing by which the heart is made better. If they be bad things, then is satire and tragedy a bad thing; let us proclaim at once an age of gold, and sink the existence of vice and misery in our speculations; let us

——wink, and shut our apprehensions up
From common sense of what men were and are:

let us *make believe* with the children that everybody is good and happy, and with Dr. Swift, write panegyrics upon the world.

But that larger half of Hogarth's works which were painted more for entertainment than instruction (though such was the suggestiveness of his mind, that there is always something to be learnt from them), his humorous scenes,—are they such as merely to disgust and set us against our species?

The confident assertions of such a man as I consider the late Mr. Barry to have been, have that weight of authority in them which staggers, at first hearing, even a long preconceived opinion. When I read his pathetic admonition concerning the shortness of life, and how much better the little leisure of it were laid out upon "that species of art which is employed about the amiable and the admirable;" and Hogarth's "method" proscribed as a "dangerous or worthless pursuit," I began to think there was something in it; that I might have been indulging all my life a passion for the works of this artist, to the utter prejudice of my taste and moral sense; but my first convictions gradually returned, a world of good-natured English faces came up one by one to my recollection, and a glance at the matchless *Election Entertainment*, which I have the happiness to have hanging up in my parlour, subverted Mr. Barry's whole theory in an instant.

In that inimitable print (which in my judgment as far exceeds the more known and celebrated *March to Finchley*, as the best comedy exceeds the best farce that ever was written) let a person look till he be saturated, and when he has done wondering at the inventiveness of genius which could bring so many characters (more than thirty distinct classes of face) into a room, and set them down at table together, or otherwise dispose them about in so natural a manner, engage them in so many easy sets and occupations, yet all partaking of the spirit of the occasion which brought them together, so that we feel that nothing but an election time could have assembled them; having no central figure or principal group (for the hero of the piece, the Candidate, is properly set aside in the levelling indistinction of the day, one must look for him to find him), nothing to detain the eye from passing from part to part, where every part is alike instinct with life,—for here are no furniture-faces, no figures brought in to fill up the scene like stage choruses, but all *dramatis personæ;* when he shall have done wondering at all these faces so strongly charactered, yet finished with the accuracy of the finest miniature; when he shall have done admiring the numberless appendages of the scene, those gratuitous doles which rich genius

flings into the heap when it has already done enough, the over-measure which it delights in giving, as if its stores were exhaustless; the dumb rhetoric of the scenery—for tables, and chairs, and joint-stools in Hogarth, are living and significant things; the witticisms that are expressed by words (all artists but Hogarth have failed when they have endeavoured to combine two mediums of expression, and have introduced words into their pictures), and the unwritten numberless little allusive pleasantries that are scattered about; the work that is going on in the scene and beyond it, as is made visible to the "eye of mind," by the mob which chokes up the doorway, and the sword that has forced an entrance before its master: when he shall have sufficiently admired this wealth of genius, let him fairly say what is the *result* left on his mind. Is it an impression of the vileness and worthlessness of his species? or is it not the general feeling which remains, after the individual faces have ceased to act sensibly on his mind, *a kindly one in favour of his species?* was not the general air of the whole scene wholesome? did it do the heart hurt to be among it? Something of a riotous spirit to be sure is there, some worldly-mindedness in some of the faces, a Doddingtonian smoothness which does not promise any superfluous degree of sincerity in the fine gentleman who has been the occasion of calling so much good company together: but is not the general cast of expression in the faces, of the good sort? do they not seem cut out of the *good old rock*, substantial English honesty? would one fear treachery among characters of their expression? or shall we call their honest mirth and seldom-returning relaxation by the hard names of vice and profligacy? That poor country fellow, that is grasping his staff (which, from that difficulty of feeling themselves at home which poor men experience at a feast, he has never parted with since he came into the room), and is enjoying with a relish that seems to fit all the capacities of his soul the slender joke, which that facetious wag his neighbour is practising upon the gouty gentleman, whose eyes the effort to suppress pain has made as round as rings—does it shock the "dignity of human nature" to look at that man and to sympathize with him in the seldom-heard joke which has unbent his care-worn hard-working visage, and drawn iron smiles from it? or with that full-hearted cobbler, who is honouring with the grasp of an honest fist the unused palm of that annoyed patrician, whom the licence of the time has seated next him?

I can see nothing "dangerous" in the contemplation of such scenes as this, or the *Enraged Musician*, or the *Southwark Fair*, or twenty other pleasant prints which come crowding in upon my recollection, in which the restless activities, the diversified bents and humours, the blameless peculiarities of men, as they deserve to be called, rather than their "vices and follies," are held up in a laughable point of view. All laughter is not of a dangerous or soul-hardening tendency. There is the petrifying sneer of a demon which excludes and kills Love, and there is the cordial laughter of a man which implies and cherishes it. What heart was ever made the worse by joining in a hearty laugh at the simplicities of Sir Hugh Evans or Parson Adams, where a sense of the ridiculous mutually kindles and is kindled by a perception of the amiable? That tumultuous harmony of singers that are roaring out the words, "The world shall bow to the Assyrian throne," from the opera of *Judith*, in the third plate of the series, called the *Four Groups of Heads;* which the quick eye of Hogarth must have struck off in the very infancy of the rage for sacred oratorios in this country, while "Music yet was young;" when we have done smiling at the deafening distortions, which these tearers of devotion to rags and tatters, these takers of Heaven by storm, in their boisterous mimicry of the occupation of angels, are making,—what unkindly impression is left behind, or what more of harsh or contemptuous feeling, than when we quietly leave Uncle Toby and Mr. Shandy riding their hobby-horses about the room? The conceited, long-backed Sign-painter, that with all the self-applause of a

Raphael or Correggio (the twist of body which his conceit has thrown him into has something of the Correggiesque in it) is contemplating the picture of a bottle which he is drawing from an actual bottle that hangs beside him, in the print of *Beer Street*,—while we smile at the enormity of the self-delusion, can we help loving the good-humour and self-complacency of the fellow? would we willingly wake him from his dream?

I say not that all the ridiculous subjects of Hogarth have necessarily something in them to make us like them; some are indifferent to us, some in their natures repulsive, and only made interesting by the wonderful skill and truth to nature in the painter; but I contend that there is in most of them that sprinkling of the better nature, which, like holy water, chases away and disperses the contagion of the bad. They have this in them besides, that they bring us acquainted with the every-day human face,—they give us skill to detect those gradations of sense and virtue (which escape the careless or fastidious observer) in the countenances of the world about us; and prevent that disgust at common life, that *tædium quotidianarum formarum*, which an unrestricted passion for ideal forms and beauties is in danger of producing. In this, as in many other things, they are analogous to the best novels of Smollett or Fielding.

# On the Poetical Works of George Wither.

THE poems of George Wither are distinguished by a hearty homeliness of manner, and a plain moral speaking. He seems to have passed his life in one continued act of an innocent self-pleasing. That which he calls his *Motto* is a continued self-eulogy of two thousand lines, yet we read it to the end without any feeling of distaste, almost without a consciousness that we have been listening all the while to a man praising himself. There are none of the cold particles in it, the hardness and self-ends which render vanity and egotism hateful. He seems to be praising another person under the mask of self; or rather we feel that it was indifferent to him where he found the virtue which he celebrates; whether another's bosom or his own, were its chosen receptacle. His poems are full, and this in particular is one downright confession of a generous self-seeking. But by self he sometimes means a great deal,—his friends, his principles, his country, the human race.

Whoever expects to find in the satirical pieces of this writer any of those peculiarities which pleased him in the satires of Dryden or Pope, will be grievously disappointed. Here are no high-finished characters, no nice traits of individual nature, few or no personalities. The game run down is coarse general vice, or folly as it appears in classes. A liar, a drunkard, a coxcomb, is *stript and whipt;* no Shaftesbury, no Villiers, or Wharton, is curiously anatomized, and read upon. But to a well-natured mind there is a charm of moral sensibility running through them which amply compensates the want of those luxuries. Wither seems everywhere bursting with a love of goodness, and a hatred of all low and base actions.—At this day it is hard to discover what parts in the poem here particularly alluded to, *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, could have occasioned the imprisonment of the author. Was Vice in High Places more suspicious than now? had she more power; or more leisure to listen after ill reports? That a man should be convicted of a libel when he named no

names but Hate, and Envy, and Lust, and Avarice, is like one of the indictments in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Faithful is arraigned for having "railed on our noble Prince Beelzebub, and spoken contemptibly of his honourable friends, the Lord Old Man, the Lord Carnal Delight, and the Lord Luxurious." What unlucky jealousy could have tempted the great men of those days to appropriate such innocent abstractions to themselves!

Wither seems to have contemplated to a degree of idolatry his own possible virtue. He is for ever anticipating persecution and martyrdom; fingering, as it were, the flames, to try how he can bear them. Perhaps his premature defiance sometimes made him obnoxious to censures, which he would otherwise have slipped by.

The homely versification of these Satires is not likely to attract in the present day. It is certainly not such as we should expect from a poet "soaring in the high region of his fancies with his garland and his singing robes about him;*" nor is it such as he has shown in his *Philarete*, and in some parts of his *Shepherds Hunting*. He seems to have adopted this dress with voluntary humility, as fittest for a moral teacher, as our divines choose sober grey or black; but in their humility consists their sweetness. The deepest tone of moral feeling in them, (though all throughout is weighty, earnest, and passionate) is in those pathetic injunctions against shedding of blood in quarrels, in the chapter entitled *Revenge*. The story of his own forbearance, which follows, is highly interesting. While the Christian sings his own victory over Anger, the Man of Courage cannot help peeping out to let you know that it was some higher principle than *fear* which counselled his forbearance.

Whether encaged, or roaming at liberty, Wither never seems to have abated a jot of that free spirit, which sets its mark upon his writings, as much as a predominant feature of independence impressed every page of our late glorious Burns; but the elder poet wraps his proof-armour closer about him, the other wears his too much outwards; he is thinking too much of annoying the foe, to be quite easy within; the spiritual defences of Wither are a perpetual source of inward sunshine; the magnanimity of the modern is not without its alloy of soreness, and a sense of injustice which seems perpetually to gall and irritate. Wither was better skilled in the "sweet uses of adversity," he knew how to extract the "precious jewel" from the head of the "toad," without drawing any of the "ugly venom" along with it.—The prison notes of Wither are finer than the wood notes of most of his poetical brethren. The description in the Fourth Eclogue of his *Shepherds Hunting* (which was composed during his imprisonment in the Marshalsea) of the power of the Muse to extract pleasure from common objects, has been oftener quoted, and is more known, than any part of his writings. Indeed the whole Eclogue is in a strain so much above not only what himself, but almost what any other poet has written, that he himself could not help noticing it; he remarks, that his spirits had been raised higher than they were wont "through the love of poesy."—The praises of Poetry have been often sung in ancient and in modern times; strange powers have been ascribed to it of influence over animate and inanimate auditors; its force over fascinated crowds has been acknowledged; but, before Wither, no one ever celebrated its power *at home*, the wealth and the strength which this divine gift confers upon its possessor. Fame, and that too after death, was all which hitherto the poets had promised themselves from their art. It seems to have been left to Wither to discover, that poetry was a present possession, as well as a rich reversion; and that the Muse had promise of both lives, of this, and of that which is to come.

The *Mistress of Philarete* is in substance a panegyric protracted through several thousand lines in the mouth of a single speaker, but diversified, so as to produce an almost dramatic effect, by the artful introduction of some ladies,

* Milton.

who are rather auditors than interlocutors in the scene; and of a boy, whose singing furnishes pretence for an occasional change of metre: though the seven-syllable line, in which the main part of it is written, is that in which Wither has shown himself so great a master, that I do not know that I am always thankful to him for the exchange.

Wither has chosen to bestow upon the lady whom he commends, the name of Arete, or Virtue; and assuming to himself the character of Philarete, or Lover of Virtue, there is a sort of propriety in that heaped measure of perfections, which he attributes to this partly real, partly allegorical personage. Drayton before him had shadowed his mistress under the name of Idea, or Perfect Pattern, and some of the old Italian love-strains are couched in such religious terms as to make it doubtful whether it be a mistress, or Divine Grace, which the poet is addressing.

In this poem (full of beauties) there are two passages of pre-eminent merit. The first is where the lover, after a flight of rapturous commendation, expresses his wonder why all men that are about his mistress, even to her servants, do not view her with the same eyes that he does.

Sometime I do admire, &c.

The other is, where he has been comparing her beauties to gold, and stars, and the most excellent things in nature; and, fearing to be accused of hyperbole, the common charge against poets, vindicates himself by boldly taking upon him, that these comparisons are no hyperboles; but that the best things in nature do, in a lover's eyes, fall short of those excellencies which he adores in her.

What pearls, what rubies can, &c.

To the measure in which these lines are written, the wits of Queen Anne's days contemptuously gave the name of Namby Pamby, in ridicule of Ambrose Philips, who has used it in some instances, as in the lines on Cuzzoni, to my feeling, at least, very deliciously; but Wither, whose darling measure it seems to have been, may show, that in skilful hands it is capable of expressing the subtilest movements of passion. So true it is, which Drayton seems to have felt, that it is the poet who modifies the metre, not the metre the poet; in his own words, that

'Tis possible to climb;
To kindle, or to stake;
Altho' in Skelton's rhyme.

# Notes on Specimens from Fuller.

(*The Reflector.* No. IV., art. xiii., 1811.)

[The heading of this paper (of which the notes only are here given) as it first appeared, ran thus:—"Specimens from the Writings of Fuller, the Church Historian." Appended to it as a signature was the letter "Y."]

THE writings of Fuller are usually designated by the title of quaint, and with sufficient reason; for such was his natural bias to conceits, that I doubt not

upon most occasions it would have been going out of his way to have expressed himself out of them. But his wit is not always a *lumen siccum*, a dry faculty of surprising; on the contrary, his conceits are oftentimes deeply steeped in human feeling and passion. Above all, his way of telling a story, for its eager liveliness, and the perpetual running commentary of the narrator happily blended with the narration, is perhaps unequalled.

As his works are now scarcely perused but by antiquaries, I thought it might not be unacceptable to my readers to present them with some specimens of his manner in single thoughts and phrases; and in some few passages of greater length, chiefly of a narrative description. I shall arrange them as I casually find them in my book of extracts, without being solicitous to specify the particular work from which they are taken.

[Upon Fuller's remarking]—"St. Paul saith, Let not the sun go down on your wrath, to carry news to the antipodes in another world of thy revengeful nature. Yet let us take the Apostle's meaning rather than his words, with all possible speed to depose our passion; not understanding him so literally, that we may take leave to be angry till sunset: then might our wrath lengthen with the days; and men in Greenland, where the day lasts above a quarter of a year, have plentiful scope for revenge."

[Lamb has the following characteristic note.]—This whimsical prevention of a consequence which no one would have thought of deducing,—setting up an absurdum on purpose to hunt it down,—placing guards as it were at the very outposts of possibility,—gravely giving out laws to insanity and prescribing moral fences to distempered intellects, could never have entered into a head less entertainingly constructed than that of Fuller, or Sir Thomas Browne, the very air of whose style the conclusion of this passage most aptly imitates.

[Fuller having observed in reference to] *Henry de Essex.*—"His large inheritance was confiscated to the king, and he himself, *partly thrust, partly going into a convent, hid his head in a cowl, under which, betwixt shame and sanctity, he blushed out the remainder of his life.*" [Lamb remarks.]—The fine imagination of Fuller has done what might have been pronounced impossible: it has given an interest, and a holy character, to coward infamy. Nothing can be more beautiful than the concluding account of the last days, and expiatory retirement, of poor Henry de Essex. The address with which the whole of this little story is told is most consummate: the charm of it seems to consist in a perpetual balance of antitheses not too violently opposed, and the consequent activity of mind in which the reader is kept:—"Betwixt traitor and coward" —"baseness to do, boldness to deny"—"partly thrust, partly going, into a convent"—"betwixt shame and sanctity." The reader by this artifice is taken into a kind of partnership with the writer,—his judgment is exercised in settling the preponderance,—he feels as if he were consulted as to the issue. But the modern historian flings at once the dead weight of his own judgment into the scale, and settles the matter.

[Fuller's observation, again, in respect to] *Sir Edward Harwood, Knt.*—"I have read of a bird, which hath a face like, and yet will prey upon, a man; who coming to the water to drink, and finding there by reflection, that he had killed one like himself, pineth away by degrees, and never afterwards enjoyeth itself," [elicits from Lamb the remark]—I do not know where Fuller read of this bird; but a more awful and affecting story, and moralizing of a story, in Natural History, or rather in that Fabulous Natural History, where poets and mythologists found the Phœnix and the Unicorn, and "other strange fowl," is no where extant. It is a fable which Sir Thomas Brown, if he had heard of it, would have exploded among his Vulgar Errors; but the delight which he would have taken in the discussing of its probabilities, would have shown that the *truth of the fact*, though the avowed object of his search, was not so much the motive which put him upon the investigation, as those hidden affinities and

poetical analogies,—those *essential varities* in the application of strange fable, which made him linger with such reluctant delay among the last fading lights of popular tradition; and not seldom to conjure up a superstition, that had been long extinct, from its dusty grave, to enter it himself with greater ceremonies and solemnities of burial.

[Where Fuller writes in regard to the] *Burning of Wickliffe's Body by Order of the Council of Constance.*—"*Thus this brook* [Swift] *has conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over.*"

[Lamb observes].—The concluding period of this most lively narrative I will not call a conceit: it is one of the grandest conceptions I ever met with. One feels the ashes of Wickliffe gliding away out of the reach of the Sumners, Commissaries, Officials, Proctors, Doctors, and all the puddering rout of executioners of the impotent rage of the baffled Council; from Swift into Avon, from Avon into Severn, from Severn into the narrow seas, from the narrow seas into the main ocean, where they become the emblem of his doctrine, "dispersed all the world over." Hamlet's tracing the body of Cæsar to the clay that stops a beer-barrel, is a no less curious pursuit of "ruined mortality:" but it is in an inverse ratio to this; it degrades and saddens us, for one part of our nature at least; but this expands the whole of our nature, and gives to the body a sort of ubiquity,—a diffusion, as far as the actions of its partner can have reach or influence.

I have seen this passage smiled at, and set down as a quaint conceit of old Fuller. But what is not a conceit to those who read it in a temper different from that in which the writer composed it? The most pathetic parts of poetry to cold tempers seem and are nonsense, as divinity was to the Greeks foolishness. When Richard II., meditating on his own utter annihilation as to royalty, cries out,

> "O that I were a mockery king of snow,
> To melt before the sun of Bolingbroke,"

if we have been going on pace for pace with the passion before, this sudden conversion of a strong-felt metaphor into something to be actually realized in nature, like that of Jeremiah, "Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears," is strictly and strikingly natural; but come unprepared upon it, and it is a conceit; and so is a "head" turned into "waters."

# On the Inconveniences Resulting from being Hanged.

(*The Reflector*, No. II., art. xii., 1811.)

[The whimsical conceit set forth in this paper was afterwards elaborated by Lamb (*vide supra* pp. 157–171) into his fantastic farce of the *Pawnbroker's Daughter.*]

I AM one of those unhappy persons whose misfortunes, it seems, do not entitle them to the benefit of pure pity. All that is bestowed upon me of that kindest alleviator of human miseries, comes dashed with a double portion of contempt.

My griefs have nothing in them that is felt as sacred by the bystanders. Yet is my affliction in truth of the deepest grain. The heaviest task that was ever given to mortal patience to sustain. Time, that wears out all other sorrows, can never modify or soften mine. Here they must continue to gnaw, as long as that fatal mark——

Why was I ever born? Why was innocence in my person suffered to be branded with a stain which was appointed only for the blackest guilt? What had I done, or my parents, that a disgrace of mine should involve a whole posterity in infamy? I am almost tempted to believe, that in some pre-existent states, crimes to which this sublunary life of mine hath been as much a stranger as the babe that is newly born into it, have drawn down upon me this vengeance, so disproportionate to my actions on this globe.

My brain sickens, and my bosom labours to be delivered of the weight that presses upon it, yet my conscious pen shrinks from the avowal. But out it must——

O, Mr. Reflector! guess at the wretch's misery, who now writes this to you, when, with tears and burning blushes, he is obliged to confess, that he has been——HANGED——

Methinks I hear an involuntary exclamation burst from you, as your imagination presents to you fearful images of your correspondent unknown,—*hanged!*

Fear not, Mr. Editor. No disembodied spirit has the honour of addressing you. I am flesh and blood, an unfortunate system of bones, muscles, sinews, arteries, like yourself.

*Then, I presume, you mean to be pleasant—That expression of yours, Mr. Correspondent, must be taken somehow in a metaphorical sense——*

In the plainest sense, without trope or figure—Yes, Mr. Editor! this neck of mine has felt the fatal noose,—these hands have tremblingly held up the corroborative prayer-book,—these lips have sucked the moisture of the last consolatory orange,—this tongue has chanted the doleful cantata which no performer was ever called upon to repeat,—this face has had the veiling night-cap drawn over it——

But for no crime of mine.—Far be it for me to arraign the justice of my country, which, though tardy, did at length recognize my innocence. It is not for me to reflect upon judge or jury, now that eleven years have elapsed since the erroneous sentence was pronounced. Men will always be infallible, and perhaps circumstances did appear at the time a little strong——

Suffice it to say, that after hanging four minutes (as the spectators were pleased to compute it,—a man that is being strangled, I know from experience, has altogether a different measure of time from his friends who are breathing leisurely about him,—I suppose the minutes lengthen as the time approaches eternity, in the same manner as the miles get longer as you travel northward—), after hanging four minutes, according to the best calculation of the bystanders, a reprieve came, and I was cut DOWN——

Really I am ashamed of deforming your pages with these technical phrases—if I knew how to express my meaning shorter——

But to proceed.—My first care after I had been brought to myself by the usual methods (those methods that are so interesting to the operator and his assistants, who are pretty numerous on such occasions,—but which no patient was ever desirous of undergoing a second time for the benefit of science), my first care was to provide myself with an enormous stock or cravat to hide the place—you understand me;—my next care was to procure a residence as distant as possible from that part of the country where I had suffered. For that reason I chose the metropolis, as the place where wounded honour (I had been told) could lurk with the least danger of exciting inquiry, and stigmatized innocence had the best chance of hiding her disgrace in a crowd. I sought

out a new circle of acquaintance, and my circumstances happily enabling me to pursue my fancy in that respect, I endeavoured, by mingling in all the pleasures which the town affords, to efface the memory of what I had undergone.

But, alas! such is the portentous and all-pervading chain of connection which links together the head and members of this great community, my scheme of lying perdu was defeated almost at the outset. A countryman of mine, whom a foolish lawsuit had brought to town, by chance met me, and the secret was soon blazoned about.

In a short time, I found myself deserted by most of those who had been my intimate friends. Not that any guilt was supposed to attach to my character. My officious countryman, to do him justice, had been candid enough to explain my perfect innocence. But, somehow or other, there is a want of strong virtue in mankind. We have plenty of the softer instincts, but the heroic character is gone. How else can I account for it, that of all my numerous acquaintance, among whom I had the honour of ranking sundry persons of education, talents, and worth, scarcely here and there one or two could be found, who had the courage to associate with a man that had been hanged.

Those few who did not desert me altogether, were persons of strong but coarse minds; and from the absence of all delicacy in them I suffered almost as much as from the superabundance of a false species of it in others. Those who stuck by me were the jokers, who thought themselves entitled by the fidelity which they had shown towards me to use me with what familiarity they pleased. Many and unfeeling are the jests that I have suffered from these rude (because faithful) Achateses. As they passed me in the streets, one would nod significantly to his companion and say, pointing to me, "Smoke his cravat," and ask me if I had got a wen, that I was so solicitous to cover my neck. Another would inquire, What news from * * * Assizes? (which you may guess, Mr. Editor, was the scene of my shame), and whether the sessions was like to prove a maiden one? A third would offer to ensure me from drowning. A fourth would tease me with inquiries how I felt when I was swinging, whether I had not something like a blue flame dancing before my eyes? A fifth took a fancy never to call me anything but *Lazarus*. And an eminent bookseller and publisher,—who, in his zeal to present the public with new facts, had he lived in those days, I am confident, would not have scrupled waiting upon the person himself last mentioned, at the most critical period of his existence, to solicit a *few facts relative to resuscitation*,—had the modesty to offer me * * guineas per sheet, if I would write, in his Magazine, a physiological account of my feelings upon coming to myself.

But these were evils which a moderate fortitude might have enabled me to truggle with. Alas! Mr. Editor, the women,—whose good graces I had always most assiduously cultivated, from whose softer minds I had hoped a more delicate and generous sympathy than I found in the men,—the women began to shun me—this was the unkindest blow of all.

But is it to be wondered at? How couldst thou imagine, wretchedest of beings, that that tender creature Seraphina would fling her pretty arms about that neck which previous circumstances had rendered infamous? That she would put up with the refuse of the rope, the leavings of the cord? Or that any analogy could subsist between the knot which binds true lovers, and the knot which ties malefactors?

I can forgive that pert baggage Flirtilla, who, when I complimented her one day on the execution which her eyes had done, replied, that, to be sure, Mr. * * was a judge of those things. But from thy more exalted mind, Celestina, I expected a more unprejudiced decision.

The person whose true name I conceal under this appellation, of all the women that I was ever acquainted with, had the most manly turn of mind,

which she had improved by reading and the best conversation. Her understanding was not more masculine than her manners and whole disposition were delicately and truly feminine. She was the daughter of an officer who had fallen in the service of his country, leaving his widow and Celestina, an only child, with a fortune sufficient to set them above want, but not to enable them to live in splendour. I had the mother's permission to pay my addresses to the young lady, and Celestina seemed to approve of my suit.

Often and often have I poured out my overcharged soul in the presence of Celestina, complaining of the hard and unfeeling prejudices of the world, and the sweet maid has again and again declared, that no irrational prejudice should hinder her from esteeming every man according to his intrinsic worth. Often has she repeated the consolatory assurance, that she could never consider as essentially ignominious an *accident*, which was indeed to be deprecated, but which might have happened to the most innocent of mankind. Then would she set forth some illustrious example, which her reading easily furnished, of a Phocion or a Socrates unjustly condemned; of a Raleigh or a Sir Thomas More, to whom late posterity had done justice; and by soothing my fancy with some such agreeable parallel, she would make me almost to triumph in my disgrace, and convert my shame into glory.

In such entertaining and instructive conversations the time passed on, till I importunately urged the mistress of my affections to name a day for our union. To this she obligingly consented, and I thought myself the happiest of mankind. But how was I surprised one morning on the receipt of the following billet from my charmer :—

Sir,—You must not impute it to levity, or to a worse failing, ingratitude, if, with anguish of heart, I feel myself compelled by irresistible arguments to recall a vow which I fear I made with too little consideration. I never can be yours. The reasons of my decision, which is final, are in my own breast, and you must everlastingly remain a stranger to them. Assure yourself that I can never cease to esteem you as I ought.

Celestina.

At the sight of this paper, I ran in frantic haste to Celestina's lodgings, where I learned, to my infinite mortification, that the mother and daughter were set off on a journey to a distant part of the country, to visit a relation, and were not expected to return in less than four months.

Stunned by this blow, which left me without the courage to solicit an explanation by letter, even if I had known where they were (for the particular address was industriously concealed from me), I waited with impatience the termination of the period, in the vain hope that I might be permitted to have a chance of softening the harsh decision by a personal interview with Celestina after her return. But before three months were at an end, I learned from the newspapers, that my beloved had—given her hand to another!

Heart-broken as I was, I was totally at a loss to account for the strange step which she had taken ; and it was not till some years after that I learned the true reason from a female relation of hers, to whom it seems Celestina had confessed in confidence, that it was no demerit of mine that had caused her to break off the match so abruptly, for any preference which she might feel for any other person, for she preferred me (she was pleased to say) to all mankind; but when she came to lay the matter closer to her heart, she found that she never should be able to bear the sight (I give you her very words as they were detailed to me by her relation)—the sight of a man in a nightcap, who had appeared on a public platform, it would lead to such a disagreeable association of ideas! And to this punctilio I was sacrificed.

To pass over an infinite series of minor mortifications, to which this last and

heaviest might well render me callous, behold me here, Mr. Editor! in the thirty-seventh year of my existence (the twelfth, reckoning from my re-animation), cut off from all respectable connections, rejected by the fairer half of the community,—who in my case alone seemed to have laid aside the characteristic pity of their sex; punished because I was once punished unjustly; suffering for no other reason than because I once had the misfortune to suffer without any cause at all. In no other country, I think, but this, could a man have been subject to such a life-long persecution, when once his innocence had been clearly established.

Had I crawled forth a rescued victim from the rack in the horrible dungeons of the Inquisition,—had I heaved myself up from a half bastinado in China, or been torn from the just-entering, ghastly impaling stake in Barbary,—had I dropped alive from the knout in Russia, or come off with a gashed neck from the half-mortal, scarce-in-time-retracted scimitar of an executioneering slave in Turkey,—I might have borne about the remnant of this frame (the mangled trophy of reprieved innocence) with credit to myself, in any of those barbarous countries. No scorn, at least, would have mingled with the pity (small as it might be) with which what was left of me would have been surveyed.

The singularity of my case has often led me to inquire into the reasons of the general levity with which the subject of hanging is treated as a topic in this country. I say as a topic: for let the very persons who speak so lightly of the thing at a distance be brought to view the real scene,—let the platform be bona fide exhibited, and the trembling culprit brought forth,—the case is changed; but as a topic of conversation, I appeal to the vulgar jokes which pass current in every street. But why mention them, when the politest authors have agreed in making use of this subject as a source of the ridiculous? Swift, and Pope, and Prior, are fond of recurring to it. Gay has built an entire drama upon this single foundation. The whole interest of the *Beggar's Opera* may be said to hang upon it. To such writers as Fielding and Smollett it is a perfect *bonne bouche.*—Hear the facetious Tom Brown, in his *Comical View of London and Westminster*, describe the *Order of the Show at one of the Tyburn Executions* in his time:—"Mr. Ordinary visits his melancholy flock in Newgate by eight. Doleful procession up Holborn Hill about eleven. Men handsome and proper that were never thought so before, which is some comfort however. Arrive at the fatal place by twelve. Burnt brandy, women, and sabbath-breaking, repented of. Some few penitential drops fall under the gallows. Sheriff's men, parson, pickpockets, criminals all very busy. The last concluding peremptory psalm struck up. Show over by one."—In this sportive strain does this misguided wit think proper to play with a subject so serious, which yet he would hardly have done, if he had not known that there existed a predisposition in the habits of his unaccountable countrymen to consider the subject as a jest. But what shall we say to Shakspere, who (not to mention the solution which the Gravedigger in *Hamlet* gives of his fellow-workman's problem), in that scene in *Measure for Measure*, where the Clown calls upon Master Barnardine to get up and be hanged, which he declines on the score of being sleepy, has actually gone out of his way to gratify this amiable propensity in his countrymen; for it is plain, from the use that was to be made of his head, and from Abhorson's asking, "Is the axe upon the block, sirrah?" that beheading, and not hanging, was the punishment to which Barnardine was destined. But Shakspere knew that the axe and block were pregnant with no ludicrous images, and therefore falsified the historic truth of his own drama (if I may so speak) rather than he would leave out such excellent matter for a jest as the suspending of a fellow-creature in mid air has been ever esteemed to be by Englishmen.

One reason why the ludicrous never fails to intrude itself into our contemplations upon this mode of death, I suppose to be, the absurd posture into which

a man is thrown who is condemned to dance, as the ulgar delight to vexpress it, upon nothing. To see him whisking and wavering in the air,

As the wind you know will wave a man;*

to behold the vacant carcass, from which the life is newly dislodged, shifting between earth and heaven, the sport of every gust; like a weathercock, serving to show from which point the wind blows; like a maukin, fit only to scare away birds; like a nest left to swing upon a bough when the bird is flown; these are uses to which we cannot without a mixture of spleen and contempt behold the human carcass reduced. We string up dogs, foxes, bats, moles, weasels. Man surely deserves a steadier death.

Another reason why the ludicrous associates more forcibly with this than with any other mode of punishment, I cannot help thinking to be the senseless costume with which old prescription has thought fit to clothe the exit of malefactors in this country. Let a man do what he will to abstract from his imagination all idea of the whimsical, something of it will come across him when he contemplates the figure of a fellow-creature in the daytime (in however distressing a situation) in a nightcap. Whether it be that this nocturnal addition has something discordant with daylight, or that it is the dress which we are seen in at those times when we are "seen," as the Angel in Milton expresses it, "leastwise;" this I am afraid will always be the case; unless indeed, as in my instance, some strong personal feeling overpower the ludicrous altogether. To me, when I reflect upon the train of misfortunes which have pursued me through life, owing to that accursed drapery, the cap presents as purely frightful an object as the sleeveless yellow coat and devil-painted mitre of the San Benitos.—An ancestor of mine, who suffered for his loyalty in the time of the civil wars, was so sensible of the truth of what I am here advancing, that on the morning of execution, no entreaties could prevail upon him to submit to the odious déshabille, as he called it, but he insisted upon wearing, and actually suffered in, the identical flowing periwig which he is painted in, in the gallery belonging to my uncle's seat in ——shire.

Suffer me, Mr. Editor, before I quit the subject, to say a word or two respecting the minister of justice in this country; in plain words, I mean the hangman. It has always appeared to me that, in the mode of inflicting capital punishments with us, there is too much of the ministry of the human hand. The guillotine, as performing its functions more of itself and sparing human agency, though a cruel and disgusting exhibition, in my mind, has many ways the advantage over *our way*. In beheading, indeed, as it was formerly practised in England, and in whipping to death, as is sometimes practised now, the hand of man is no doubt sufficiently busy; but there is something less repugnant in these downright blows than in the officious barber-like ministerings of *the other*. To have a fellow with his hangman's hands fumbling about your collar, adjusting the thing as your valet would regulate your cravat, valuing himself on his menial dexterity——

I never shall forget meeting my rascal,—I mean the fellow who officiated for me,—in London last winter. I think I see him now,—in a waistcoat that had been mine,—smirking along as if he knew me——

In some parts of Germany, that fellow's office is by law declared infamous, and his posterity incapable of being ennobled. They have hereditary hangmen, or had at least, in the same manner as they had hereditary other great officers of state; and the hangmen's families of two adjoining parishes intermarried with each other, to keep the breed entire. I wish something of the same kind were established in England.

But it is time to quit a subject which teems with disagreeable images——

Permit me to subscribe myself, Mr. Editor, Your unfortunate friend,

PENSILIS.

* Hieronimo in the *Spanish Tragedy*.

# On the Danger of Confounding Moral with Personal Deformity.

WITH A HINT TO THOSE HAVING THE FRAMING OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR APPREHENDING OFFENDERS.

(*The Reflector*, No. II., art. XV., 1811.)

[When it originally appeared, this paper was signed "Crito."]

MR. REFLECTOR, there is no science in their pretensions to which mankind are more apt to commit grievous mistakes, than in the supposed very obvious one of physiognomy. I quarrel not with the principles of this science, as they are laid down by learned professors; much less am I disposed, with some people, to deny its existence altogether as any inlet of knowledge that can be depended upon. I believe that there is, or may be, an art to "read the mind's construction in the face." But, then, in every species of *reading*, so much depends upon the eyes of the reader; if they are blear, or apt to dazzle, or inattentive, or strained with too much attention, the optic power will infallibly bring home false reports of what it reads. How often do we say, upon a cursory glance at a stranger, what a fine open countenance he has, who, upon second inspection, proves to have the exact features of a knave. Nay, in much more intimate acquaintances, how a delusion of this kind shall continue for months, years, and then break up all at once.

Ask the married man, who has been so but for a short space of time, if those blue eyes where, during so many years of anxious courtship, truth, sweetness, serenity, seemed to be written in characters which could not be misunderstood —ask him if the characters which they now convey be exactly the same?—if for truth he does not *read* a dull virtue (the mimic of constancy) which changes not, only because it wants the judgment to make a preference?—if for sweetness he does not *read* a stupid habit of looking pleased at everything,—if for serenity he does not *read* animal tranquillity, the dead pool of the heart, which no breeze of passion can stir into health? Alas! what is this book of the countenance good for, which when we have read so long, and thought that we understood its contents, there comes a countless list of heart-breaking errata at the end!

But these are the pitiable mistakes to which love alone is subject. I have inadvertently wandered from my purpose, which was to expose quite an opposite blunder, into which we are no less apt to fall, through hate. How ugly a person looks upon whose reputation some awkward aspersion hangs, and how suddenly his countenance clears up with his character. I remember being persuaded of a man whom I had conceived an ill opinion of, that he had a very bad set of teeth; which, since I have had better opportunities of being acquainted with his face and facts, I find to have been the very reverse of the truth. *That crooked old woman*, I once said, speaking of an aged gentlewoman, whose actions did not square altogether with my notions of the rule of right. The unanimous surprise of the company before whom I uttered these words, soon convinced me that I had confounded mental with bodily obliquity, and that there was nothing tortuous about the old lady but her deeds.

This humour of mankind to deny personal comeliness to those with whose

moral attributes they are dissatisfied, is very strongly shown in those advertisements, which stare us in the face from the walls of every street, and, with the tempting bait which they hang forth, stimulate at once cupidity and an abstract love of justice in the breast of every passing peruser; I mean, the advertisements offering rewards for the apprehension of absconded culprits, strayed apprentices, bankrupts who have conveyed away their effects, debtors that have run away from their bail. I observe, that in exact proportion to the indignity with which the prosecutor, who is commonly the framer of the advertisement, conceives he has been treated, the personal pretensions of the fugitive are denied, and his defects exaggerated.

A fellow, whose misdeeds have been directed against the public in general, and in whose delinquency no individual shall feel himself particularly interested, generally meets with fair usage. A coiner or a smuggler shall get off tolerably well. His beauty, if he has any, is not underrated, his deformities are not much magnified. A runaway apprentice, who excites perhaps the next least degree of spleen in his prosecutor, generally escapes with a pair of bandy legs; if he has taken anything with him in his flight, a hitch in his gait is generally superadded. A bankrupt, who has been guilty of withdrawing his effects, if his case be not very atrocious, commonly meets with mild usage. But a debtor who has left his bail in jeopardy, is sure to be described in characters of unmingled deformity. Here the personal feelings of the bail, which may be allowed to be somewhat poignant, are admitted to interfere; and, as wrath and revenge commonly strike in the dark, the colours are laid on with a grossness which I am convinced must often defeat its own purpose. The fish that casts an inky cloud about him that his enemies may not find him, cannot more obscure himself by that device than the blackening representations of these angry advertisers must inevitably serve to cloak and screen the persons of those who have injured them from detection. I have before me at this moment one of these bills, which runs thus:—

Fifty Pounds Reward.

"Run away from his bail, John Tomkins, formerly resident in Princes Street, Soho, but lately of Clerkenwell. Whoever shall apprehend, or cause to be apprehended and lodged in one of his Majesty's jails, the said John Tomkins, shall receive the above reward. He is a thickset, sturdy man, about five foot six inches high, halts in his left leg, with a stoop in his gait, with coarse red hair, nose short and cocked up, with little grey eyes; one of them bears the effect of a blow which he has lately received, with a pot belly, speaks with a thick and disagreeable voice, goes shabbily dressed, had on when he went away a greasy shag great coat, with rusty yellow buttons."

Now, although it is not out of the compass of possibility that John Tomkins aforesaid may comprehend in his agreeable person all the above-mentioned aggregate of charms; yet, from my observation of the manner in which these advertisements are usually drawn up, though I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman, yet would I lay a wager that an advertisement to the following effect would have a much better chance of apprehending and laying by the heels this John Tomkins than the above description, although penned by one who, from the good services which he appears to have done for him, has not improbably been blessed with some years of previous intercourse with the said John. Taking, then, the above advertisement to be true, or nearly so, down to the words "left leg" inclusive (though I have some doubt if the blemish there implied amount to a positive lameness, or be perceivable by any but the nearest friends of John) I would proceed thus:—

—"Leans a little forward in his walk, his hair thick and inclining to auburn, his nose of a middle size, a little turned up at the end, lively hazel eyes (the contusion, as its effects are probably gone off by this time, I judge better

omitted), inclines to be corpulent, his voice thick but pleasing, especially when he sings, had on a decent shag greatcoat with yellow buttons."

Now, I would stake a considerable wager (though by no means a positive man) that some such mitigated description would lead the beagles of the law into a much surer track for finding this ungracious varlet, than to set them upon a false scent after fictitious ugliness and fictitious shabbiness; though, to do those gentlemen justice, I have no doubt their experience has taught them in all such cases to abate a great deal of the deformity which they are instructed to expect; and has discovered to them that the Devil's agents upon this earth, like their master, are far less ugly in reality than they are painted.

I am afraid, Mr. Reflector, that I shall be thought to have gone wide of my subject, which was to detect the practical errors of physiognomy properly so called; whereas I have introduced physical defects, such as lameness, the effects of accidents upon a man's person, his wearing apparel, &c., as circumstances on which the eye of dislike, looking askance, may report erroneous conclusions to the understanding. But if we are liable, through a kind, or an unkind passion, to mistake so grossly concerning things so exterior and palpable, how much more are we likely to err respecting those nicer and less perceptible hints of character in a face, whose detection constitutes the triumph of the physiognomist?

To revert to those bestowers of unmerited deformity, the framers of advertisements for the apprehension of delinqents, a sincere desire of promoting the ends of public justice induces me to address a word to them on the best means of attaining those ends. I will endeavour to lay down a few practical, or rather negative, rules for their use, for my ambition extends no further than to arm them with cautions against the self-defeating of their own purposes:—

1. Imprimis, then' Mr, Advertiser! If the culprit whom you are willing to recover be one to whom in times past you have shown kindness, and been disposed to think kindly of him yourself, but he has deceived your trust, and run away, and left you with a load of debt to answer for him,—sit down calmly, and endeavour to behold him through the spectacles of memory rather than of present conceit. Imagine to yourself, before you pen a tittle of his description, the same plausible, good-looking man who took you in; and try to put away from your mind every intrusion of that deceitful spectre which perpetually obtrudes itself in the room of your former friend's known visage. It will do you more credit to have been deceived by such a one; and depend upon it, the traitor will convey to the eyes of the world in general much more of that first idea which you formed (perhaps in part erroneous) of his physiognomy, than of that frightful substitute which you have suffered to creep in upon your mind and usurp upon it; a creature which has no archetype except in your own brain.

2. If you be a master that have to advertise a runaway apprentice, though the young dog's faults are known only to you, and no doubt his conduct has been aggravating enough, do not presently set him down as having crooked ankles. He may have a good pair of legs, and run away notwithstanding. Indeed, the latter does rather seem to imply the former.

3. If the unhappy person against whom your laudable vengeance is directed be a thief, think that a thief may have a good nose, good eyes, good ears. It is indispensable to his profession that he be possessed of sagacity, foresight, vigilance; it is more than probable, then, that he is endued with the bodily types or instruments of these qualities to some tolerable degree of perfectness.

4. If petty larceny be his offence, I exhort you, do not confound meanness of crime with diminutiveness of stature. These things have no connection. I have known a tall man stoop to the basest action, a short man aspire to the height of crime, a fair man be guilty of the foulest actions, &c.

5. Perhaps the offender has been guilty of some atrocious and aggravated

murder. Here is the most difficult case of all. It is above all requisite, that such a daring violator of the peace and safety of society should meet with his reward, a violent and ignominious death. But how shall we get at him? Who is there among us, that has known him before he committed the offence, that shall take upon him to say he can sit down coolly and pen a dispassionate description of a murderer? The tales of our nursery,—the reading of our youth,—the ill-looking man that was hired by the Uncle to despatch the Children in the Wood,—the grim ruffians who smothered the babes in the Tower,—the black and beetle-browed assassin of Mrs. Radcliffe,—the shag-haired villain of Mr. Monk Lewis,—the Tarquin tread, and mill-stone dropping eyes, of Murder in Shakspere,—the exaggerations of picture and of poetry,—what we have read and what we have dreamed of,—rise up and crowd in upon us such eye-scaring portraits of the man of blood, that our pen is absolutely forestalled; we commence poets when we should play the part of strictest historians, and the very blackness of horror which the deed calls up, serves as a cloud to screen the doer. The fiction is blameless, it is accordant with those wise prejudices with which nature has guarded our innocence, as with impassable barriers, against the commission of such appalling crimes; but, meantime, the criminal escapes; or if,—owing to that wise abatement in their expectation of deformity, which, as I hinted at before, the officers of pursuit never fail to make, and no doubt in cases of this sort they make a more than ordinary allowance,—if, owing to this or any accident, the offender is caught and brought to his trial, who that has been led out of curiosity to witness such a scene, has not with astonishment reflected on the difference between a real committer of a murder, and the idea of one which he has been collecting and heightening all his life out of books, dreams, &c. The fellow, perhaps, is a sleek, smug-looking man, with light hair and eye-brows,—the latter by no means jutting out or like a crag,—and with none of those marks which our fancy had pre-bestowed upon him.

I find I am getting unawares too serious; the best way on such occasions is, to leave off, which I shall do by generally recommending to all prosecuting advertisers not to confound crimes with ugliness; or rather, to distinguish between that physiognomical deformity, which I am willing to grant always accompanies crime, and mere *physical ugliness*,—which signifies nothing, is the exponent of nothing, and may exist in a good or a bad person indifferently.

# Guy Faux.

(*The Reflector*, No. II., art. xvi., 1811.)

[As originally printed in the *Reflector*, the following paper, which was there signed "Speculator," had affixed to it this roundabout heading, "On the Probable Effects of the Gunpowder Treason in this Country if the Conspirators had accomplished their Object." The briefer title here given was first attached to it when the paper was reprinted in the *London Magazine* of November, 1823.]

A VERY ingenious and subtle writer, whom there is good reason for suspecting to be an ex-Jesuit, not unknown at Douay some five-and-twenty years since

(he will not obtrude himself at M——th again in a hurry), about a twelvemonth back set himself to prove the character of the Powder Plot Conspirators to have been that of heroic self-devotedness and true Christian martyrdom. Under the mask of Protestant candour, he actually gained admission for his treatise into a London weekly paper not particularly distinguished for its zeal towards either religion. But, admitting Catholic principles, his arguments are shrewd and incontrovertible. He says:—

"Guy Faux was a fanatic; but he was no hypocrite. He ranks among *good haters*. He was cruel, bloody-minded, reckless of all considerations but those of an infuriated and bigoted faith; but he was a true son of the Catholic Church, a martyr, and a confessor, for all that. He who can prevail upon himself to devote his life to a cause, however we may condemn his opinions or abhor his actions, vouches at least for the honesty of his principles and the disinterestedness of his motives. He may be guilty of the worst practices; but he is capable of the greatest. He is no longer a slave, but free. The contempt of death is the beginning of virtue. The hero of the Gunpowder Plot was, if you will, a fool, a madman, an assassin; call him what names you please: still he was neither knave nor coward. He did not propose to blow up the parliament, and come off scot-free himself: he showed that he valued his own life no more than theirs in such a cause, where the integrity of the Catholic faith and the salvation of perhaps millions of souls was at stake. He did not call it a murder, but a sacrifice, which he was about to achieve: he was armed with the Holy Spirit and with fire: he was the Church's chosen servant, and her blessed martyr. He comforted himself as 'the best of cut-throats.' How many wretches are there who would have undertaken to do what he intended, for a sum of money, if they could have got off with impunity! How few are there who would have put themselves in Guy Faux's situation to save the universe! Yet, in the latter case, we affect to be thrown into greater consternation than at the most unredeemed acts of villany; as if the absolute disinterestedness of the motive doubled the horror of the deed! The cowardice and selfishness of mankind are in fact shocked at the consequences to themselves (if such examples are held up for imitation); and they make a fearful outcry against the violation of every principle of morality, lest they, too, should be called on for any such tremendous sacrifices; lest they in their turn, should have to go on the forlorn hope of extra-official duty. *Charity begins at home* is a maxim that prevails as well in the courts of consciousness as in those of prudence. We would be thought to shudder at the consequences of crime to others, while we tremble for them to ourselves. We talk of the dark and cowardly assassin; and this is well, when an individual shrinks from the face of an enemy, and purchases his own safety by striking a blow in the dark: but how the charge of cowardly can be applied to the public assassin, who, in the very act of destroying another, lays down his life as the pledge and forfeit of his sincerity and boldness, I am at a loss to devise. There may be barbarous prejudice, rooted hatred, unprincipled treachery in such an act; but he who resolves to take all the danger and odium upon himself can no more be branded with cowardice, than Regulus devoting himself for his country, or Codrus leaping into the fiery gulf. A wily Father Inquisitor, coolly and with plenary authority condemning hundreds of helpless, unoffending victims to the flames, or the horrors of a living tomb, while he himself would not suffer a hair of his head to be hurt, is, to me, a character without any qualifying trait in it. Again: The Spanish conqueror and hero, the favourite of his monarch, who enticed thirty thousand poor Mexicans into a large open building under promise of strict faith and cordial good-will, and then set fire to it, making sport of the cries and agonies of these deluded creatures, is an instance of uniting the most hardened cruelty with the most heartless selfishness. His plea was, keeping no faith with heretics; this was Guy Faux's too: but I am

sure at least that the latter kept faith with himself; he was in earnest in his professions. *His* was not gay, wanton, unfeeling depravity; he did not murder in sport: it was serious work that he had taken in hand. To see this arch-bigot, this heart-whole traitor, this pale miner in the infernal regions, skulking in his retreat with his cloak and dark lantern, moving cautiously about among his barrels of gunpowder loaded with death, but not yet ripe for destruction, regardless of the lives of others, and more than indifferent to his own, presents a picture of the strange infatuation of the human understanding, but not of the depravity of the human will, without an equal. There were thousands of pious Papists privy to and ready to applaud the deed when done: there was no one but our old fifth-of-November friend, who still flutters in rags and straw on the occasion, that had the courage to attempt it. In him stern duty and unshaken faith prevailed over natural frailty."

It is impossible, upon Catholic principles, not to admit the force of this reasoning: we can only not help smiling (with the writer) at the simplicity of the gulled editor, swallowing the dregs of Loyola for the very quintessence of sublimated reason in England at the commencement of the nineteenth century. We will just, as a contrast, show what we Protestants (who are a party concerned) thought upon the same subject at a period rather nearer to the heroic project in question.

The Gunpowder Treason was the subject which called forth the earliest specimen which is left us of the pulpit eloquence of Jeremy Taylor. When he preached the sermon on that anniversary, which is printed at the end of the folio edition of his Sermons, he was a young man, just commencing his ministry under the auspices of Archbishop Laud. From the learning and maturest oratory which it manifests, one should rather have conjectured it to have proceeded from the same person after he was ripened by time into a Bishop and Father of the Church. "And, really, these *Romano-barbari* could never pretend to any precedent for an act so barbarous as theirs. Adramelech, indeed, killed a king; but he spared the people. Haman would have killed the people, but spared the king; but that both king and people, princes and judges, branch and rush and root, should die at once (as if Caligula's wish were actuated, and all England upon one head), was never known till now, that all the malice of the world met in this as in a centre. The Sicilian even-song, the matins of St. Bartholomew, known for the pitiless and damned massacres, were but καπνου σκίας ὄναρ, the dream of the shadow of smoke, if compared with this great fire. *In tam occupato sæculo fabulas vulgares nequitia non invenit.* This was a busy age. Herostratus must have invented a more sublimed malice than the burning of one temple, or not have been so much as spoke of since the discovery of the powder treason. But I must make more haste; I shall not else climb the sublimity of this impiety. Nero was sometimes the *populare odium*, was popularly hated, and deserved it too: for he slew his master, and his wife, and all his family, once or twice over; opened his mother's womb; fired the city, laughed at it, slandered the Christians for it: but yet all these were but *principia malorum*, the very first rudiments of evil. Add, then, to these, Herod's masterpiece at Ramah, as it was deciphered by the tears and sad threnes of the matrons in a universal mourning for the loss of their pretty infants; yet this of Herod will prove but an infant wickedness, and that of Nero the evil but of one city. I would willingly have found out an example, but see I cannot. Should I put into the scale the extract of the old tyrants famous in antique stories:—

> "Bistonii stabulum regis, Busiridis aras,
> Antiphatæ mensas, et Taurica regna Thoantis;—

should I take for true story the highest cruelty as it was fancied by the most hieroglyphical Egyptian,—this alone would weigh them down, as if the Alps

were put in scale against the dust of a balance. For, had this accursed treason prospered, we should have had the whole kingdom mourn for the inestimable loss of its chiefest glory, its life, its present joy, and all its very hopes for the future. For such was their destined malice, that they would not only have inflicted so cruel a blow, but have made it incurable, by cutting off our supplies of joy, the whole succession of the Line Royal. Not only the vine itself, but all the *gemmulæ*, and the tender olive branches, should either have been bent to their intentions, and made to grow crooked, or else been broken.

"And now, after such a sublimity of malice, I will not instance in the sacrilegious ruin of the neighbouring temples, which needs must have perished in the flame; nor in the disturbing the ashes of our entombed kings, devouring their dead ruins like sepulchral dogs: these are but minutes in respect of the ruin prepared for the living temples:—

> "Stragem sed istam non tulit
> Christus cadentum Principum
> Impune, ne forsan sui
> Patris periret fabrica.
> Ergo quæ poterit lingua retexere
> Laudes, Christe, tuas, qui domitum struis
> Infidum populum cum Duce perfido!"

In such strains of eloquent indignation did Jeremy Taylor's young oratory inveigh against that stupendous attempt which he truly says had no parallel in ancient or modern times. A century and a half of European crimes has elapsed since he made the assertion, and his position remains in its strength. He wrote near the time in which the nefarious project had like to have been completed. Men's minds still were shuddering from the recentness of the escape. It must have been within his memory, or have been sounded in his ears so young by his parents, that he would seem, in his maturer years, to have remembered it. No wonder, then, that he describes it in words that burn. But to us, to whom the tradition has come slowly down, and has had time to cool, the story of Guido Vaux sounds rather like a tale, a fable, and an invention, than true history. It supposes such gigantic audacity of daring, combined with such more than infantile stupidity in the motive,—such a combination of the fiend and the monkey,—that credulity is almost swallowed up in contemplating the singularity of the attempt. It has accordingly, in some degree, shared the fate of fiction. It is familiarized to us in a kind of serio-ludicrous way, like the story of *Guy of Warwick*, or *Valentine and Orson*. The way which we take to perpetuate the memory of this deliverance is well adapted to keep up this fabular notion. Boys go about the streets annually with a beggarly scarecrow dressed up, which is to be burnt indeed, at night, with holy zeal; but, meantime, they beg a penny for *poor Guy*: this periodical petition, which we have heard from our infancy, combined with the dress and appearance of the effigy, so well calculated to move compassion, has the effect of quite removing from our fancy the horrid circumstances of the story which is thus commemorated; and in *poor Guy* vainly should we try to recognize any of the features of that tremendous madman in iniquity, Guido Vaux, with his horrid crew of accomplices, that sought to emulate earthquakes and bursting volcanoes in their more than mortal mischief.

Indeed, the whole ceremony of burning Guy Faux, or *the Pope*, as he is indifferently called, is a sort of *Treason Travestie*, and admirably adapted to lower our feelings upon this memorable subject. The printers of the little duodecimo *Prayer Book*, printed by T. Baskett,* in 1749, which has the effigy

* The same, I presume, upon whom the clergyman in the song of the "Vicar and Moses," not without judgment, passes this memorable censure:

> "Here, Moses the king:
> 'Tis a scandalous thing
> That this Baskett should print for the Crown."

of his sacred majesty George II. piously prefixed, have illustrated the service (a very fine one in itself), which is appointed for the anniversary of this day, with a print, which it is not very easy to describe; but the contents appear to be these: The scene is a room, I conjecture in the king's palace. Two persons —one of whom I take to be James himself, from his wearing his hat, while the other stands bareheaded—are intently surveying a sort of speculum, or magic mirror, which stands upon a pedestal in the midst of the room, in which a little figure of Guy Faux with his dark lantern, approaching the door of the Parliament House, is made discernible by the light proceeding from a *great eye* which shines in from the topmost corner of the apartment; by which eye the pious artist no doubt meant to designate Providence. On the other side of the mirror is a figure doing something, which puzzled me when a child, and continues to puzzle me now. The best I can make of it is, that it is a conspirator busy laying the train; but, then, why is he represented in the king's chamber? Conjecture upon so fantastical a design is vain; and I only notice the print as being one of the earliest graphic representations which woke my childhood into wonder, and doubtless combined, with the mummery before mentioned, to take off the edge of that horror which the naked historical mention of Guido's conspiracy could not have failed of exciting.

Now that so many years are past since that abominable machination was happily frustrated, it will not, I hope, be considered a profane sporting with the subject, if we take no very serious survey of the consequences that would have flowed from this plot if it had had a successful issue. The first thing that strikes us, in a selfish point of view, is the material change which it must have produced in the course of the nobility. All the ancient peerage being extinguished, as it was intended, at one blow, the *Red Book* must have been closed for ever, or a new race of peers must have been created to supply the deficiency. As the first part of this dilemma is a deal too shocking to think of, what a fund of mouth-watering reflections does this give rise to in the breast of us plebeians of A.D. 1823! Why, you or I, reader, might have been Duke of ——, or Earl of ——. I particularize no titles, to avoid the least suspicion of intention to usurp the dignities of the two noblemen whom I have in my eye; but a feeling more dignified than envy sometimes excites a sigh, when I think how the posterity of Guido's Legion of Honour (among whom you or I might have been) might have rolled down "dulcified," as Burke expresses it, "by an exposure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations, from the hard, acidulous, metallic tincture of the spring."* What new orders of merit, think you, this English Napoleon would have chosen? Knights of the Barrel, or Lords of the Tub, Grand Almoners of the Cellar, or Ministers of Explosion? We should have given the train *couchant*, and the fire *rampant*, in our arms; we should have quartered the dozen white matches in our coats: the Shallows would have been nothing to us.

Turning away from these mortifying reflections, let us contemplate its effects upon the *other house;* for they were all to have gone together,—king, lords, commons.

To assist our imagination, let us take leave to suppose (and we do it in the harmless wantonness of fancy) that the tremendous explosion had taken place in our days. We better know what a House of Commons is in our days, and can better estimate our loss. Let us imagine, then, to ourselves, the united members sitting in full conclave above; Faux just ready with his train and matches below,—in his hand a "reed tipt with fire." He applies the fatal engine.

To assist our notions still further, let us suppose some lucky dog of a reporter, who had escaped by miracle upon some plank of St. Stephen's benches, and came plump upon the roof of the adjacent Abbey; from whence descend-

* Letter to a Noble Lord.

ing, at some neighbouring coffee-house, first wiping his clothes and calling for a glass of lemonade, he sits down and reports what he had heard and seen (*quorum pars magna fuit*), for the *Morning Post* or the *Courier.* We can scarcely imagine him describing the event in any other words but some such as these :—

"A *motion* was put and carried, that this House do *adjourn;* that the speaker do *quit the chair.* The House ROSE amid clamours for order."

In some such way the event might most technically have been conveyed to the public. But a poetical mind, not content with this dry method of narration, cannot help pursuing the effects of this tremendous blowing up, this adjournment in the air, *sine die.* It seems the benches mount,—the chair first, and then the benches ; and first the treasury bench, hurried up in this nitrous explosion,—the members, as it were, pairing off; Whigs and Tories taking their friendly apotheosis together (as they did their sandwiches below in Bellamy's room). Fancy, in her flight, keeps pace with the aspiring legislators : she sees the awful seat of order mounting, till it becomes finally fixed, a constellation, next to Cassiopeia's chair,—the wig of him that sat in it taking its place near Berenice's curls. St. Peter, at heaven's wicket,—no, not St. Peter,—St. Stephen, with open arms, receives his own.

While Fancy beholds these celestial appropriations, Reason, no less pleased, discerns the mighty benefit which so complete a renovation must produce below. Let the most determined foe to corruption, the most thorough-paced redresser of abuses, try to conceive a more absolute purification of the House, than this was calculated to produce. Why, Pride's purge was nothing to it. The whole borough-mongering system would have been got rid of, fairly *exploded;* with it the senseless distinctions of party must have disappeared, faction must have vanished, corruption have expired in the air. From Hundred, Tything, and Wapentake, some new Alfred would have convened, in all its purity, the primitive Witenagemote,—fixed upon a basis of property or population permanent as the poles.

From this dream of universal restitution, Reason and Fancy with difficulty awake to view the real state of things. But, blessed be Heaven ! St. Stephen's walls are standing, all her seats firmly secured ; nay, some have doubted (since the Septennial Act) whether gunpowder itself, or anything short of a *committee above stairs*, would be able to shake any one member from his seat. That great and final improvement to the Abbey, which is all that seems wanting,—the removing Westminster Hall and its appendages, and letting in the view of the Thames,—must not be expected in our days. Dismissing, therefore, all such speculations as mere tales of a tub, it is the duty of every honest Englishman to endeavour, by means less wholesale than Guido's, to ameliorate, without extinguishing parliaments ; to hold the *lantern* to the dark places of corruption ; to apply the *match* to the rotten parts of the system only ; and to wrap himself up, not in the muffling mantle of conspiracy, but in the warm honest *cloak* of integrity and patriotic intention.

## On the Ambiguities arising from Proper Names.

(*The Reflector*, No. II., Art. xxi., 1811.)

HOW oddly it happens that the same sound shall suggest to the minds of two persons hearing it ideas the most opposite ! I was conversing, a few years

since, with a young friend upon the subject of poetry, and particularly that species of it which is known by the name of the epithalamium. I ventured to assert that the most perfect specimen of it in our language was the "Epithalamium" of Spenser upon his own marriage.

My young gentleman, who has a smattering of taste, and would not willingly be thought ignorant of anything remotely connected with the *belles-lettres*, expressed a degree of surprise, mixed with mortification, that he should never have heard of this poem; Spenser being an author with whose writings he thought himself peculiarly conversant.

I offered to show him the poem in the fine folio copy of the poet's works which I have at home. He seemed pleased with the offer, though the mention of the folio seemed again to puzzle him. But, presently after, assuming a grave look, he compassionately muttered to himself, "Poor Spencer!"

There was something in the tone with which he spoke these words that struck me not a little. It was more like the accent with which a man bemoans some recent calamity that has happened to a friend, than that tone of sober grief with which we lament the sorrows of a person, however excellent and however grievous his afflictions may have been, who has been dead more than two centuries. I had the curiosity to inquire into the reasons of so uncommon an ejaculation. My young gentleman, with a more solemn tone of pathos than before, repeated, "Poor Spencer!" and added, "He has lost his wife!"

My astonishment at this assertion rose to such a height, that I began to think the brain of my young friend must be cracked, or some unaccountable reverie had gotten possession of it. But, upon further explanation, it appeared that the word "Spenser"—which to you or me, reader, in a conversation upon poetry too, would naturally have called up the idea of an old poet in a ruff, one Edmund Spenser, that flourished in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and wrote a poem called "The Faëry Queene," with "The Shepherd's Calendar," and many more verses besides—did, in the mind of my young friend, excite a very different and quite modern idea; namely, that of the Honourable William Spencer, one of the living ornaments, if I am not misinformed, of this present poetical era, A.D. 1811.

# On the Custom of Hissing at the Theatres.

## WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF A CLUB OF DAMNED AUTHORS.

(*The Reflector*, No. III., Art. xi., 1811.)

MR. REFLECTOR,—I am one of those persons whom the world has thought proper to designate by the title of Damned Authors. In that memorable season of dramatic failures, 1806–7,—in which no fewer, I think, than two tragedies, four comedies, one opera, and three farces suffered at Drury Lane Theatre,—I was found guilty of constructing an afterpiece, and was *damned*.

Against the decision of the public in such instances there can be no appeal. The clerk of Chatham might as well have protested against the decision of Cade and his followers who were then *the public*. Like him, I was condemned because I could write.

Not but it did appear to some of us that the measures of the popular tribunal at that period savoured a little of harshness and of the *summum jus.* The public mouth was early in the season fleshed upon the "Vindictive Man," and some pieces of that nature; and it retained, through the remainder of it, a relish of blood. As Dr. Johnson would have said, "Sir, there was a habit of sibilation in the house."

Still less am I disposed to inquire into the reason of the comparative lenity, on the other hand, with which some pieces were treated, which, to indifferent judges, seemed at least as much deserving of condemnation as some of those which met with it. I am willing to put a favourable construction upon the votes that were given against us; I believe that there was no bribery or designed partiality in the case: only "our nonsense did not happen to suit their nonsense;" that was all.

But against the *manner* in which the public, on these occasions, think fit to deliver their disapprobation, I must and ever will protest.

Sir, imagine—but you have been present at the damning of a piece (those who never had that felicity, I beg them to imagine)—a vast theatre, like that which Drury Lane was before it was a heap of dust and ashes (I insult not over its fallen greatness; let it recover itself when it can for me, let it lift up its towering head once more, and take in poor authors to write for it; *hic cæstus artemque repono*),—a theatre like that, filled with all sorts of disgusting sounds,—shrieks, groans, hisses, but chiefly the last, like the noise of many waters, or that which Don Quixote heard from the fulling-mills, or that wilder combination of devilish sounds which St. Anthony listened to in the wilderness.

Oh! Mr. Reflector, is it not a pity that the sweet human voice, which was given man to speak with, to sing with, to whisper tones of love in, to express compliance, to convey a favour, or to grant a suit,—that voice, which in a Siddons or a Braham rouses us, in a siren Catalani charms and captivates us,—that the musical, expressive human voice should be converted into a rival of the noises of silly geese, and irrational, venomous snakes?

I never shall forget the sounds on *my night.* I never before that time fully felt the reception which the Author of All Ill, in the "Paradise Lost," meets with from the critics in the *pit*, at the final close of his "Tragedy upon the Human Race,"—though that, alas! met with too much success:—

> "From innumerable tongues
> A dismal universal *hiss*, the sound
> Of public scorn. Dreadful was the din
> Of *hissing* through the hall, thick swarming now
> With complicated monsters, head and tail,
> Scorpion and asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
> Cerastes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear,
> And Dipsas."

For *hall* substitute *theatre*, and you have the very image of what takes place at what is called the *damnation* of a piece,—and properly so called; for here you see its origin plainly, whence the custom was derived, and what the first piece was that so suffered. After this, none can doubt the propriety of the appellation.

But, sir, as to the justice of bestowing such appalling, heart-withering denunciations of the popular obloquy upon the venial mistake of a poor author, who thought to please us in the act of filling his pockets,—for the sum of his demerits amounts to no more than that,—it does, I own, seem to me a species of retributive justice far too severe for the offence. A culprit in the pillory (bate the eggs) meets with no severer exprobation.

Indeed, I have often wondered that some modest critic has not proposed that there should be a wooden machine to that effect erected in some con-

venient part of the *proscenium*, which an unsuccessful author should be required to mount, and stand his hour, exposed to the apples and oranges of the pit. This *amende honorable* would well suit with the meanness of some authors, who, in their prologues, fairly prostrate their skulls to the audience, and seem to invite a pelting.

Or why should they not have their pens publicly broke over their heads, as the swords of recreant knights in old times were, and an oath administered to them that they should never write again?

Seriously, *Messieurs the Public*, this outrageous way which you have got of expressing your displeasures is too much for the occasion. When I was deafening under the effects of it, I could not help asking what crime of great moral turpitude I had committed: for every man about me seemed to feel the offence as personal to himself: as something which public interest and private feelings alike called upon him in the strongest possible manner, to stigmatize with infamy.

The Romans, it is well-known to you, Mr. Reflector, took a gentler method of marking their disapprobation of an author's work. They were a humane and equitable nation. They left the *furca* and the *patibulum*, the axe and the rods, to great offenders: for these minor and (if I may so term them) extra-moral offences, *the bent thumb* was considered as a sufficient sign of disapprobation,—*vertere pollicem;* as *the pressed thumb*, *premere pollicem*, was a mark of approving.

And really there seems to have been a sort of fitness in this method, a correspondency of sign in the punishment to the offence. For, as the action of writing is performed by bending the thumb forward, the retroversion or bending back of that joint did not unaptly point to the opposite of that action; implying that it was the will of the audience that the author should *write no more:* a much more significant as well as more humane way of expressing that desire than our custom of hissing, which is altogether senseless and indefensible. Nor do we find that the Roman audiences deprived themselves, by this lenity, of any tittle of that supremacy which audiences in all ages have thought themselves bound to maintain over such as have been candidates for their applause. On the contrary, by this method they seem to have had the author, as we should express it, completely *under finger and thumb.*

The provocations to which a dramatic genius is exposed from the public are so much the more vexatious as they are removed from any possibility of retaliation, which sweetens most other injuries; for the public *never writes itself.* Not but something very like it took place at the time of the O.P. differences. The placards which were nightly exhibited were, properly speaking, the composition of the public. The public wrote them, the public applauded them; and precious morceaux of wit and eloquence they were,—except some few, of a better quality, which it is well known were furnished by professed dramatic writers. After this specimen of what the public can do for itself, it should be a little slow in condemning what others do for it.

As the degrees of malignancy vary in people according as they have more or less of the Old Serpent (the father of hisses) in their composition, I have sometimes amused myself with analyzing this many-headed hydra, which calls itself the public, into the component parts of which it is "complicated, head and tail," and seeing how many varieties of the snake kind it can afford.

First, there is the Common English Snake.—This is that part of the auditory who are always the majority at damnations; but who, having no critical venom in themselves to sting them on, stay till they hear others hiss, and then join in for company.

The Blind Worm is a species very nearly allied to the foregoing. Some naturalists have doubted whether they are not the same.

The Rattlesnake.—These are your obstreperous talking critics,—the im-

pertinent guides of the pit,—who will not give a plain man leave to enjoy an evening's entertainment; but with their frothy jargon and incessant finding of faults, either drown his pleasure quite, or force him, in his own defence, to join in their clamorous censure. The hiss always originates with these. When this creature springs his *rattle*, you would think, from the noise it makes, there was something in it; but you have only to examine the instrument from which the noise proceeds, and you will find it typical of a critic's tongue,—a shallow membrane, empty, voluble, and seated in the most contemptible part of the creature's body.

The Whipsnake.—This is he that lashes the poor author the next day in the newspapers.

The Deaf Adder, or *Surda Echidna* of Linnæus.—Under this head may be classed all that portion of the spectators (for audience they properly are not), who, not finding the first act of a piece answer to their preconceived notions of what a first act should be, like Obstinate in John Bunyan, positively thrust their fingers in their ears, that they may not hear a word of what is coming, though perhaps the very next act may be composed in a style as different as possible, and be written quite to their own tastes. These adders refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, because the tuning of his instrument gave them offence.

I should weary you and myself too, if I were to go through all the classes of the serpent kind. Two qualities are common to them all. They are creatures of remarkably cold digestions, and chiefly haunt *pits* and low grounds.

I proceed with more pleasure to give you an account of a club to which I have the honour to belong. There are fourteen of us, who are all authors that have been once in our lives what is called *damned*. We meet on the anniversary of our respective nights, and make ourselves merry at the expense of the public. The chief tenets which distinguish our society, and which every man among us is bound to hold for gospel, are,—

That the public, or mob, in all ages have been a set of blind, deaf, obstinate, senseless, illiterate savages. That no man of genius, in his senses, would be ambitious of pleasing such a capricious, ungrateful rabble. That the only legitimate end of writing for them is to pick their pockets; and, that failing, we are at full liberty to vilify and abuse them as much as ever we think fit.

That authors, by their affected pretences to humility, which they made use of as a cloak to insinuate their writings into the callous senses of the multitude, obtuse to everything but the grossest flattery, have by degrees made that great beast their master; as we may act submission to children till we are obliged to practise it in earnest. That authors are and ought to be considered the masters and preceptors of the public, and not *vice versâ*. That it was so in the days of Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus; and would be so again, if it were not that writers prove traitors to themselves. That, in particular, in the days of the first of those three great authors just mentioned, audiences appear to have been perfect models of what audiences should be; for though, along with the trees and the rocks and the wild creatures which he drew after him to listen to his strains, some serpents doubtless came to hear his music, it does not appear that any one among them ever lifted up *a dissentient voice*. They knew what was due to authors in those days. Now every stock and stone turns into a serpent, and has a voice.

That the terms "courteous reader" and "candid auditors," as having given rise to a false notion in those to whom they were applied, as if they conferred upon them some right, *which they cannot have*, of exercising their judgments, ought to be utterly banished and exploded.

These are our distinguishing tenets. To keep up the memory of the cause in which we suffered, as the ancients sacrificed a goat, a supposed unhealthy animal, to Æsculapius, on our feast-nights we cut up a goose, an animal typical of *the popular voice*, to the deities of Candour and Patient Hearing. A zealous member of the society once proposed that we should revive the obsolete luxury of viper-broth; but the stomachs of some of the company rising at the proposition, we lost the benefit of that highly salutary and *antidotal dish.*

The privileges of admission to our club is strictly limited to such as have been fairly *damned.* A piece that has met with ever so little applause, that has but languished its night or two, and then gone out, will never entitle its author to a seat among us. An exception to our usual readiness in conferring this privilege is in the case of a writer, who, having been once condemned, writes again, and becomes candidate for a second martyrdom. Simple damnation we hold to be a merit; but to be twice damned we adjudge infamous. Such a one we utterly reject, and blackball without a hearing :—

"*The common damned shun his society.*"

Hoping that your publication of our regulations may be a means of inviting some more members into our society, I conclude this long letter.—I am, Sir, yours, SEMEL-DAMNATUS.

# On Burial Societies; and the Character of an Undertaker.

(*The Reflector*, No. III., Art. xi., 1811.)

MR. REFLECTOR,—I was amused the other day with having the following notice thrust into my hand by a man who gives out bills at the corner of Fleet Market. Whether he saw any prognostics about me, that made him judge such a notice seasonable, I cannot say; I might perhaps carry in a countenance (naturally not very florid) traces of a fever which had not long left me. Those fellows have a good instinctive way of guessing at the sort of people that are likeliest to pay attention to their papers.

"BURIAL SOCIETY.

"A favourable opportunity now offers to any person of either sex, who would wish to be buried in a genteel manner, by paying one shilling entrance, and twopence per week for the benefit of the stock. Members to be free in six months. The money to be paid at Mr. Middleton's, at the sign of the *First* and the *Last*, Stonecutter's Street, Fleet Market. The deceased to be furnished as follows :—A strong elm coffin, covered with superfine black, and finished with two rows, all round, close drove, best japanned nails, and adorned with ornamental drops, a handsome plate of inscription, Angel above, and Flower beneath, and four pair of handsome handles, with wrought gripes; the coffin to be well pitched, lined, and ruffled with fine crape; a handsome crape shroud, cap and pillow. For use, a handsome velvet pall, three gentlemen's cloaks, three crape hatbands, three hoods and scarfs, and six pairs of

gloves; two porters equipped to attend the funeral, a man to attend the same with band and gloves; also, the burial fees paid, if not exceeding one guinea."

"Man," says Sir Thomas Browne, "is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave." Whoever drew up this little advertisement, certainly understood this appetite in the species, and has made abundant provision for it. It really almost induces a *tædium vitæ* upon one to read it. Methinks I could be willing to die, in death to be so attended. The two rows all round close-drove best black japanned nails, how feelingly do they invite and irresistibly persuade us to come and be fastened down! What aching head can resist the temptation to repose, which the crape shroud, the cap, and the pillow present? What sting is there in death, which the handles with wrought gripes are not calculated to pluck away? What victory in the grave, which the drops and the velvet pall do not render at least extremely disputable? but above all, the pretty emblematic plate with the Angel above and the Flower beneath, takes me mightily.

The notice goes on to inform us, that though the society has been established but a few years, upwards of eleven hundred persons have put down their names. It is really an affecting consideration to think of so many poor people, of the industrious and hard-working class (for none but such would be possessed of such a generous forethought) clubbing their twopences to save the reproach of a parish funeral. Many a poor fellow, I dare swear, has that Angel and Flower kept from the *Angel* and *Punchbowl*, while, to provide himself a bier, he has curtailed himself of *beer*. Many a savoury morsel has the living body been deprived of, that the lifeless one might be served up in a richer state to the worms. And sure, if the body could understand the actions of the soul, and entertain generous notions of things, it would thank its provident partner, that she had been more solicitous to defend it from dishonours at its dissolution, than careful to pamper it with good things in the time of its union. If Cæsar were chiefly anxious at his death how he might die most decently, every Burial Society may be considered as a club of Cæsars.

Nothing tends to keep up, in the imaginations of the poorer sort of people, a generous horror of the workhouse more than the manner in which pauper funerals are conducted in this metropolis. The coffin nothing but a few naked planks, coarsely put together,—the want of a pall (that decent and well-imagined veil, which, hiding the coffin that hides the body, keeps that which would shock us at two removes from us), the coloured coats of the men that are hired, at cheap rates, to carry the body,—altogether give the notion of the deceased having been some person of an ill-life and conversation, some one who may not claim the entire rites of Christian burial,—one by whom some parts of the sacred ceremony would be desecrated if they should be bestowed upon him. I meet these meagre processions sometimes in the streets. They are sure to make me out of humour and melancholy all the day after. They have a harsh and ominous aspect.

If there is anything in the prospectus issued from Mr. Middleton's, Stonecutter's Street, which pleases me less than the rest, it is to find that the six pairs of gloves are to be returned, that they are only lent, or, as the bill expresses it, for use, on the occasion. The hoods, scarfs, and hatbands, may properly enough be given up, after the solemnity: the cloaks no gentleman would think of keeping; but a pair of gloves, once fitted on, ought not in courtesy to be re-demanded. The wearer should certainly have the fee-simple of them. The cost would be but trifling, and they would be a proper memorial of the day. This part of the proposal wants reconsidering. It is not conceived in the same liberal way of thinking as the rest. I am also a little doubtful whether the limit, within which the burial-fee is made payable, should not be extended to thirty shillings.

Some provision too ought undoubtedly to be made in favour of those well-intentioned persons and well-wishers to the fund, who, having all along paid their subscriptions regularly, are so unfortunate as to die before the six months, which would entitle them to their freedom, are quite completed. One can hardly imagine a more distressing case than that of a poor fellow lingering on in a consumption till the period of his freedom is almost in sight, and then finding himself going with a velocity which makes it doubtful whether he shall be entitled to his funeral honours: his quota to which he nevertheless squeezes out to the diminution of the comforts which sickness demands. I think, in such cases, some of the contribution-money ought to revert. With some such modifications, which might easily be introduced, I see nothing in these Proposals of Mr. Middleton which is not strictly fair and genteel; and heartily recommend them to all persons of moderate incomes, in either sex, who are willing that this perishable part of them should quit the scene of its mortal activities, with as handsome circumstances as possible.

Before I quit the subject, I must guard my readers against a scandal, which they may be apt to take at the place whence these Proposals purport to be issued. From the sign of the *First* and the *Last*, they may conclude that Mr. Middleton is some publican, who, in assembling a club of this description at his house, may have a sinister end of his own, altogether foreign to the solemn purpose for which the club is pretended to be instituted. I must set them right by informing them that the issuer of these Proposals is no publican, though he hangs out a sign, but an honest superintendent of funerals, who, by the device of a Cradle and a Coffin, connecting both ends of human existence together, has most ingeniously contrived to insinuate, that the framers of these *first* and *last* receptacles of mankind divide this our life betwixt them, and that all that passes from the midwife to the undertaker may, in strict propriety, *go for nothing:* an awful and instructive lesson to human vanity.

Looking over some papers lately that fell into my hands by chance, and appear to have been written about the beginning of the last century, I stumbled, among the rest, upon the following short Essay, which the writer calls "*The Character of an Undertaker.*" It is written with some stiffness and peculiarities of style, but some parts of it, I think, not unaptly characterize the profession to which Mr. Middleton has the honour to belong. The writer doubtless had in his mind the entertaining character of Sable, in Steele's excellent comedy of the *Funeral.*

"CHARACTER OF AN UNDERTAKER.

"He is master of the ceremonies at burials and mourning assemblies, grand marshal at funeral processions, the only true yeoman of the body, over which he exercises a dictatorial authority from the moment that the breath has taken leave to that of its final commitment to the earth. His ministry begins where the physician's, the lawyer's, and the divine's end. Or if some part of the functions of the latter run parallel with his, it is only *in ordine ad spiritualia.* His temporalities remain unquestioned. He is arbitrator of all questions of honour which may concern the defunct; and upon slight inspection will pronounce how long he may remain in this upper world with credit to himself, and when it will be prudent for his reputation to retire. His determination in these points is peremptory and without appeal. Yet, with a modesty peculiar to his profession, he meddles not out of his own sphere. With the good or bad actions of the deceased in his lifetime he has nothing to do. He leaves the friends of the dead man to form their own conjectures as to the place to which the departed spirit is gone. His care is only about the exuviæ. He concerns not himself even about the body, as it is a structure of parts internal, and a wonderful microcosm. He leaves such curious speculations to the

anatomy professor. Or, if anything, he is averse to such wanton inquiries, as delighting rather that the parts which he has care of should be returned to their kindred dust in as handsome and unmutilated a condition as possible; that the grave should have its full and unimpaired tribute,—a complete and just carcass. Nor is he only careful to provide for the body's entireness, but for its accommodation and ornament. He orders the fashion of its clothes, and designs the symmetry of its dwelling. Its vanity has an innocent survival in him. He is bed-maker to the dead. The pillows which he lays never rumple. The day of interment is the theatre in which he displays the mysteries of his art. It is hard to describe what he is, or rather to tell what he is not, on that day: for, being neither kinsman, servant, or friend, he is all in turns; a transcendent, running through all those relations. His office is to supply the place of self-agency in the family, who are presumed incapable of it through grief. He is eyes, and ears, and hands, to the whole household. A draught of wine can not go round to the mourners, but he must minister it. A chair may hardly be restored to its place by a less solemn hand than his. He takes upon himself all functions, and is a sort of ephemeral major-domo! He distributes his attentions among the company assembled according to the degree of affliction, which he calculates to the degree of kin from the deceased; and marshals them accordingly in the procession. He himself is of a sad and tristful countenance; yet such as (if well examined) is not without some show of patience and resignation at bottom: prefiguring, as it were, to the friends of the deceased, what their grief shall be when the hand of Time shall have softened and taken down the bitterness of their first anguish; so handsomely can he fore-shape and anticipate the work of Time. Lastly, with his wand, as with another divining rod, he calculates the depth of earth at which the bones of the dead man may rest, which he ordinarily contrives may be at such a distance from the surface of this earth, as may frustrate the profane attempts of such as would violate his repose, yet sufficiently on this side the centre to give his friends hopes of an easy and practicable resurrection. And here we leave him, casting in dust to dust, which is the last friendly office that he *undertakes* to do." Begging your pardon for detaining you so long among graves, and worms, and epitaphs, I am, Sir, your humble servant, MORITURUS.

# Edax on Appetite.

(*The Reflector*, No. IV., Art. xix., 1811.)

I AM going to lay before you a case of the most iniquitous persecution that ever poor devil suffered.

You must know, then, that I have been visited with a calamity ever since my birth. How shall I mention it without offending delicacy? Yet, out it must. My sufferings, then, have all arisen from a most inordinate appetite——

Not for wealth, not for vast possessions,—then might I have hoped to find a cure in some of those precepts of philosophers or poets,—those *verba et voces* which Horace speaks of:

> "quibus hunc lenire dolorem
> Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem;"

not for glory, not for fame, not for applause,—for against this disease, too, he tells us there are certain piacula, or, as Pope has chosen to render it,

> " rhymes, which fresh and fresh applied,
> Will cure the arrant'st puppy of his pride ;"

nor yet for pleasure, properly so called ; the strict and virtuous lessons which I received in early life from the best of parents—a pious clergyman of the Church of England, now no more,—I trust have rendered me sufficiently secure on that side :—

No; sir, for none of these things : but an appetite, in its coarsest and least metaphorical sense,—an appetite for *food*.

The exorbitances of my arrow-root and pap-dish days I cannot go back far enough to remember, only I have been told that, my mother's constitution not admitting of my being nursed at home, the woman who had the care of me for that purpose used to make most extravagant demands for my pretended excesses in that kind ; which my parents, rather than believe anything unpleasant of me, chose to impute to the known covetousness and mercenary disposition of that sort of people. This blindness continued on their part after I was sent for home, up to the period when it was thought proper, on account of my advanced age, that I should mix with other boys more unreservedly than I had hitherto done. I was accordingly sent to boarding-school.

Here the melancholy truth became too apparent to be disguised. The prying republic of which a great school consists, soon found me out : there was no shifting the blame any longer upon other people's shoulders,—no good-natured maid to take upon herself the enormities of which I stood accused in the article of bread and butter, besides the crying sin of stolen ends of puddings, and cold pies strangely missing. The truth was but too manifest in my looks,—in the evident signs of inanition which I exhibited after the fullest meals, in spite of the double allowance which my master was privately instructed by my kind parents to give me. The sense of the ridiculous, which is but too much alive in grown persons, is tenfold more active and alert in boys. Once detected, I was the constant butt of their arrows,—the mark against which every puny leveller directed his little shaft of scorn. The very Graduses and Thesauruses were raked for phrases to pelt me with by the tiny pedants. *Ventri natus,—Ventri deditus,—Vesana gula,—Escarum gurges,—Dapibus indulgens,—Non dans fræna gulæ,—Sectans lautæ fercula mensæ,* resounded wheresoever I passed. I led a weary life, suffering the penalties of guilt for that which was no crime, but only following the blameless dictates of nature. The remembrance of those childish reproaches haunts me yet oftentimes in my dreams. My school-days come again, and the horror I used to feel, when in some silent corner retired from the notice of my unfeeling playfellows, I have sat to mumble the solitary slice of gingerbread allotted me by the bounty of considerate friends, and have ached at heart because I could not spare a portion of it, as I saw other boys do, to some favourite boy ;—for if I know my own heart, I was never selfish,—never possessed a luxury which I did not hasten to communicate to others ; but my food, alas ! was none ; it was an indispensable necessary ; I could as soon have spared the blood in my veins, as have parted that with my companions.

Well, no one stage of suffering lasts for ever : we should grow reconciled to it at length, I suppose, if it did. The miseries of my school-days had their end ; I was once more restored to the paternal dwelling. The affectionate solicitude of my parents was directed to the good-natured purpose of concealing even from myself the infirmity which haunted me. I was continually told that I was growing, and the appetite I displayed was humanely represented as being nothing more than a symptom and an effect of that. I used even to be complimented upon it. But this temporary fiction could not endure above a

year or two. I ceased to grow, but alas! I did not cease my demands for alimentary sustenance.

Those times are long since passed, and with them have ceased to exist the fond concealment,—the indulgent blindness,—the delicate overlooking,—the compassionate fiction. I and my infirmity are left exposed and bare to the broad, unwinking eye of the world, which nothing can elude. My meals are scanned, my mouthfuls weighed in a balance: that which appetite demands, is set down to the account of gluttony,—a sin which my whole soul abhors, nay, which Nature herself has put it out of my power to commit. I am constitutionally disenabled from that vice; for how can he be guilty of excess, who never can get enough? Let them cease, then, to watch my plate; and leave off their ungracious comparisons of it to the seven baskets of fragments, and the supernaturally replenished cup of old Baucis; and be thankful that their more phlegmatic stomachs, not their virtue, have saved them from the like reproaches. I do not see that any of them desist from eating till the holy rage of hunger, as some one calls it, is supplied. Alas! I am doomed to stop short of that continence.

What am I to do? I am, by disposition, inclined to conviviality and the social meal. I am no gourmand: I require no dainties: I should despise the board of Heliogabalus, except for its long sitting. Those vivacious, long-continued meals of the latter Romans, indeed, I justly envy; but the kind of fare which the Curii and Dentati put up with, I could be content with. Dentatus I have been called, among other unsavoury jests. Double-meal is another name which my acquaintance have palmed upon me, for an innocent piece of policy which I put in practice for some time without being found out; which was,—going the round of my friends, beginning with the most primitive feeders among them, who take their dinner about one o'clock, and so successively dropping in upon the next and the next, till by the time I got among my more fashionable intimates, whose hour was six or seven, I have nearly made up the body of a just and complete meal (as I reckon it), without taking more than one dinner (as they account of dinners) at one person's house. Since I have been found out, I endeavour to make up my damper, as I call it, at home, before I go out. But alas! with me, increase of appetite truly grows by what it feeds on. What is peculiarly offensive to me at those dinner-parties is, the senseless custom of cheese, and the dessert afterwards. I have a rational antipathy to the former; and for fruit, and those other vain vegetable substitutes for meat (meat, the only legitimate aliment for human creatures since the Flood, as I take it to be deduced from that permission, or ordinance rather, given to Noah and his descendants), I hold them in perfect contempt. Hay for horses. I remember a pretty apologue, which Mandeville tells very much to this purpose in his Fable of the Bees:—He brings in a Lion arguing with a Merchant, who had ventured to expostulate with this king of beasts upon his violent methods of feeding. The Lion thus retorts:—"Savage I am; but no creature can be called cruel but what either by malice or insensibility extinguishes his natural pity. The Lion was born without compassion; we follow the instinct of our nature; the gods have appointed us to live upon the waste and spoil of other animals, and as long as we can meet with dead ones, we never hunt after the living; 'tis only man, mischievous man, that can make death a sport. Nature taught your stomach to crave nothing but vegetables. —(Under favour of the Lion, if he meant to assert this universally of mankind, it is not true. However, what he says presently is very sensible.)—Your violent fondness to change, and greater eagerness after novelties, have prompted you to the destruction of animals without justice or necessity. The Lion has a ferment within him, that consumes the toughest skin and hardest bones, as well as the flesh of all animals without exception. Your squeamish stomach, in which the digestive heat is weak and inconsiderable, won't so

much as admit of the most tender parts of them, unless above half the concoction has been performed by artificial fire beforehand; and yet what animal have you spared, to satisfy the caprices of a languid appetite? Languid, I say; for what is man's hunger if compared with the Lion's? Yours, when it is at the worst, makes you faint; mine makes me mad: oft have I tried with roots and herbs to allay the violence of it, but in vain; nothing but large quantities of flesh can any ways appease it."—Allowing for the Lion not having a prophetic instinct to take in every *lusus naturæ* that was possible of the human appetite, he was, generally speaking in the right; and the Merchant was so impressed with his argument that, we are told, he replied not, but fainted away. O, Mr. Reflector, that I were not obliged to add, that the creature who thus argues was but a type of me! Miserable man! *I am that Lion.* Oft have I tried with roots and herbs to allay that violence, but in vain; nothing but——"

Those tales, which are renewed as often as the editors of papers want to fill up a space in their unfeeling columns, of great eaters,—people that devour whole geese and legs of mutton *for wagers*, are sometimes attempted to be drawn to a parallel with my case. This wilful confounding of motives and circumstances, which make all the difference or moral or immoral in actions, just suits the sort of talent which some of my acquaintance pride themselves upon. *Wagers!*—I thank heaven I was never mercenary, nor could consent to prostitute a gift (though but a left-handed one) of nature to the enlarging of my worldly substance; prudent as the necessities, which that fatal gift have involved me in, might have made such a prostitution to appear in the eyes of an indelicate world.

Rather, let me say, that to the satisfaction of that talent which was given me, I have been content to sacrifice no common expectations; for such I had from an old lady, a near relation of our family, in whose good graces I had the fortune to stand, till one fatal evening——. You have seen, Mr. Reflector, if you have ever passed your time much in country towns, the kind of suppers which elderly ladies in those places have lying in petto in an adjoining parlour, next to that where they are entertaining their periodically-invited coevals with cards and muffins. The cloth is usually spread some half-hour before the final rubber is decided, whence they adjourn to sup upon what may emphatically be called *nothing*. A sliver of ham, purposely contrived to be transparent to show the china-dish through it, neighbouring a slip of invisible brawn, which abuts upon something they call a tartlet, as that is bravely supported by an atom of marmalade, flanked in its turn by a grain of potted beef, with a power of such dishlings, *minims of hospitality*, spread in defiance of human nature, or rather with an utter ignorance of what it demands. Being engaged at one of these card parties, I was obliged to go a little before *supper-time* (as they facetiously call the point of time in which they are taking these shadowy refections), and the old lady, with a sort of fear shining through the smile of courteous hospitality that beamed in her countenance, begged me to step into the next room and take something before I went out into the cold,—a proposal which lay not in my nature to deny. Indignant at the airy prospect I saw before me, I set-to, and in a trice despatched the whole meal intended for eleven persons,—fish, flesh, fowl, pastry,—to the sprigs of garnishing parsley, and the last fearful custard that quaked upon the board. I need not describe the consternation, when in due time the dowagers adjourned from their cards. Where was the supper?—and the servants' answer Mr. —— had eat it all. That freak, however, jested me out of a good three hundred pounds a year, which I afterwards was informed for a certainty the old lady meant to leave me. I mention it not in illustration of the unhappy faculty which I am possessed of; for any unlucky wag of a school-boy, with a tolerable appetite, could have done as much without feeling any hurt after it,—only that you may judge

whether I am a man likely to set my talent to sale, or to require the pitiful stimulus of a wager.

I have read in Pliny, or in some author of that stamp, of a reptile in Africa, whose venom is of that hot, destructive quality, that wheresoever it fastens its tooth, the whole substance of the animal that has been bitten in a few seconds is reduced to dust, crumbles away, and absolutely disappears: it is called, from this quality, the Annihilator. Why am I forced to seek, in all the most prodigious and portentous facts of Natural History, for creatures typical of myself. *I am that Snake, that Annihilator:* "wherever I fasten, in a few seconds——"

O happy sick men, that are groaning under the want of that very thing, the excess of which is my torment! O fortunate, too fortunate, if you knew your happiness, invalids! What would I not give to exchange this fierce concoctive and digestive heat,—this rabid fury which vexes me, which tears and torments me,—for your quiet, mortified, hermit-like, subdued, and sanctified stomachs,—your cool, chastened inclinations, and coy desires for food!

To what unhappy figuration of the parts intestine I owe this unnatural craving I must leave to the anatomists and the physicians to determine: they, like the rest of the world, have doubtless their eye upon me; and as I have been cut up alive by the sarcasms of my friends, so I shudder when I contemplate the probability that this animal frame, when its restless appetites shall have ceased their importunity, may be cut up also (horrible suggestion!) to detirmine in what systems of solids or fluids this original sin of my constitution lay lurking. What work will they make with their acids and alkalines, their serums and coagulums, effervescences, viscous matter, bile, chyle, and acrimonious juices, to explain that cause which nature, who willed the effect to punish me for my sins, may no less have determined to keep in the dark from them, to punish them for their presumption.

You may ask, Mr. Reflector, to what purpose is my appeal to you: what can you do for me? Alas! I know too well that my case is out of the reach of advice,—out of the reach of consolation. But it is some relief to the wounded heart to impart its tale of misery; and some of my acquaintance, who may read my case in your pages, under a borrowed name, may be induced to give it a more humane consideration than I could ever yet obtain from them under my own. Make them, if possible, to *reflect*, that an original peculiarity of constitution is no crime; that not that which goes into the mouth desecrates a man but that which comes out of it,—such as sarcasm, bitter jests, mocks and taunts, and ill-natured observations; and let them consider, if there be such things (which we have heard of) as Pious Treachery, Innocent Adultery, &c., whether there may not be also such a thing as Innocent Gluttony.

Your afflicted Servant,

EDAX.

## Hospita on the Immoderate Indulgence of the Palate.

(*The Reflector*, No. IV., Art. xix., 1811.)

MR. REFLECTOR.—My husband and I are fond of company, and being in easy circumstances, we are seldom without a party to dinner two or three days in a week. The utmost cordiality has hitherto prevailed at our meetings: but

there is a young gentleman, a near relation of my husband's, that has lately come among us, whose preposterous behaviour bids fair, if not timely checked, to disturb our tranquillity. He is too great a favourite with my husband, in other respects, for me to remonstrate with him in any other than this distant way. A letter printed in your publication may catch his eye; for he is a great reader, and makes a point of seeing all the new things that come out. Indeed, he is by no means deficient in understanding. My husband says that he has a good deal of wit; but for my part I cannot say I am any judge of that, having seldom observed him open his mouth except for purposes very foreign to conversation. In short, sir, this young gentleman's failing is, an immoderate indulgence of his palate. The first time he dined with us, he thought it necessary to extenuate the length of time he kept the dinner on the table, by declaring that he had taken a very long walk in the morning, and came in fasting; but as that excuse could not serve above once or twice at most, he has latterly dropped the mask altogether, and chosen to appear in his own proper colours without reserve or apology.

You cannot imagine how unpleasant his conduct has become. His way of staring at the dishes as they are brought in has absolutely something immodest in it: it is like the stare of an impudent man of fashion at a fine woman, when she first comes into a room. I am positively in pain for the dishes, and cannot help thinking they have consciousness, and will be put out of countenance, he treats them so like what they are not.

Then, again, he makes no scruple of keeping a joint of meat on the table, after the cheese and fruit are brought in, till he has what he calls *done with it*. Now how awkward this looks, where there are ladies; you may judge, Mr. Reflector, how it disturbs the order and comfort of a meal. And yet I always make a point of helping him first, contrary to all good manners,—before any of my female friends are helped,—that he may avoid this very error. I wish he would eat before he comes out.

What makes his proceedings more particularly offensive at our house is, that my husband, though out of common politeness he is obliged to set dishes of animal food before his visitors, yet himself and his whole family (myself included) feed entirely on vegetables. We have a theory that animal food is neither wholesome nor natural to man; and even vegetables we refuse to eat until they have undergone the operation of fire, in consideration of those numberless little living creatures which the glass helps us to detect in every fibre of the plant or root before it be dressed. On the same theory we boil our water, which is our only drink, before we suffer it to come to table. Our children are perfect little Pythagoreans: it would do you good to see them in their nursery, stuffing their dried fruits, figs, rasins, and *milk*, which is the only approach to animal food which is allowed. They have no notion how the substance of a creature that ever had life can become food for another creature. Beef-steak is an absurdity to them; a mutton-chop, a solecism in terms; a cutlet, a word absolutely without any meaning; a butcher is nonsense, except so far as it is taken for a man who delights in blood, or a hero. In this happy state of innocence we have kept their minds, not allowing them to go into the kitchen, or to hear of any preparations for the dressing of animal food, or even to know that such things are practised. But as a state of ignorance is incompatible with a certain age; and as my eldest girl, who is ten years old next Midsummer, must shortly be introduced into the world and sit at table with us, where she will see some things which will shock all her received notions, I have been endeavouring by little and little to break her mind, and prepare it for the disagreeable impressions which must be forced upon it. The first hint I gave her upon the subject, I could see her recoil from it with the same horror with which we listen to a tale of Anthropophagism; but she has gradually grown more reconciled to it in some measure, from my telling her that it was the

custom of the world,—to which, however senseless, we must submit so far a we could do it with innocence not to give offence; and she has shown so much strength of mind on other occasions, which I have no doubt is owing to the calmness and serenity superinduced by her diet, that I am in good hopes, when the proper season for her *début* arrives, she may be brought to endure the sight of a roasted chicken or a dish of sweetbreads, for the first time, without fainting. Such being the nature of our little household, you may guess what inroads into the economy of it,—what revolutions and turnings of things upside down, the example of such a feeder as Mr.—— is calculated to produce.

I wonder at a time like the present, when the scarcity of every kind of food is so painfully acknowledged, that *shame* has no effect upon him. Can he have read Mr. Malthus's Thoughts on the Ratio of Food to Population? Can he think it reasonable that one man should consume the sustenance of many?

The young gentleman has an agreeable air and person, such as are not unlikely to recommend him on the score of matrimony. But his fortune is not over large; and what prudent young woman would think of embarking hers with a man who would bring three or four mouths (or what is equivalent to them) into a family? She might as reasonably choose a widower in the same circumstances with three or four children.

I cannot think who he takes after. His father and mother, by all accounts, were very moderate eaters; only I have heard that the latter swallowed her victuals very fast, and the former had a tedious custom of sitting long at his meals. Perhaps he takes after both.

I wish you would turn this in your thoughts, Mr. Reflector, and give us your ideas on the subject of excessive eating; and, particularly, of animal food.

HOSPITA.

# The Good Clerk, A Character;

## WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF "THE COMPLETE ENGLISH TRADESMAN."

(*The Reflector*, No. IV., ART. xxiii., 1811.)

[Signed with the first and last letter of the author's surname, "L. B."]

THE Good Clerk.—He writeth a fair and swift hand, and is competently versed in the four first rules of arithmetic, in the Rule of Three (which is sometimes called the Golden Rule), and in Practice. We mention these things that we may leave no room for cavillers to say that anything essential hath been omitted in our definition; else, to speak the truth, these are but ordinary accomplishments, and such as every understrapper at a desk is commonly furnished with. The character we treat of soareth higher.

He is clean and neat in his person, not from a vainglorious desire of setting himself forth to advantage in the eyes of the other sex, with which vanity too many of our young sparks nowadays are infected; but to do credit, as we say, to the office. For this reason, he evermore taketh care that his desk or his

books receive no soil; the which things he is commonly as solicitous to have fair and unblemished, as the owner of a fine horse is to have him appear in good keep.

He riseth early in the morning; not because early rising conduceth to health (though he doth not altogether despise that consideration), but chiefly to the intent that he may be first at the desk. There is his post,—there he delighteth to be, unless when his meals or necessity calleth him away; which time he alway esteemeth as loss, and maketh as short as possible.

He is temperate in eating and drinking, that he may preserve a clear head and steady hand for his master's service. He is also partly induced to this observation to the rules of temperance by his respect for religion and the laws of his country; which things, it may once for all be noted, do add special assistances to his actions, but do not and cannot furnish the main-spring or motive thereto. His first ambition, as appeareth all along, is to be a good clerk; his next, a good Christian, a good patriot, &c.

Correspondent to this, he keepeth himself honest, not for fear of the laws, but because he hath observed how unseemly an article it maketh in the day-book or ledger when a sum is set down lost or missing; it being his pride to make these books to agree and to tally, the one side with the other, with a sort of architectural symmetry and correspondence.

He marrieth, or marrieth not, as best suiteth with his employer's views. Some merchants do the rather desire to have married men in their counting-houses, because they think the married state a pledge for their servants' integrity, and an incitement to them to be industrious; and it was an observation of a late Lord Mayor of London, that the sons of clerks do generally prove clerks themselves, and that merchants encouraging persons in their employ to marry, and to have families, was the best method of securing a breed of sober, industrious young men attached to the mercantile interest. Be this as it may, such a character as we have been describing will wait till the pleasure of his employer is known on this point; and regulateth his desires by the custom of the house or firm to which he belongeth.

He avoideth profane oaths and jesting, as so much time lost from his employ. What spare time he hath for conversation, which, in a counting-house such as we have been supposing, can be but small, he spendeth in putting seasonable questions to such of his fellows (and sometimes *respectfully* to the master himself) who can give him information respecting the price and quality of goods, the state of exchange, or the latest improvements in book-keeping; thus making the motion of his lips, as well as of his fingers, subservient to his master's interest. Not that he refuseth a brisk saying, or a cheerful sally of wit, when it comes unforced, is free of offence, and hath a convenient brevity. For this reason, he hath commonly some such phrase as this in his mouth:—

It's a slovenly look
To blot your book.

Or,

Red ink for ornament, black for use:
The best of things are open to abuse.

So upon the eve of any great holy-day, of which he keepeth one or two at least every year, he will merrily say, in the hearing of a confidential friend, but to none other,—

All work and no play
Makes Jack a dull boy.

Or,

A bow always bent must crack at last.

But then this must always be understood to be spoken confidentially, and, as we say, *under the rose.*

Lastly, his dress is plain, without singularity; with no other ornament than the quill, which is the badge of his function, stuck behind the dexter ear, and this rather for convenience of having it at hand, when he hath been called away from his desk, and expecteth to resume his seat there again shortly, than from any delight which he taketh in foppery or ostentation. The colour of his clothes is generally noted to be black rather than brown, brown rather than blue or green. His whole deportment is staid, modest, and civil. His motto is "Regularity."

This character was sketched in an interval of business, to divert some of the melancholy hours of a counting-house. It is so little a creature of fancy, that it is scarce anything more than a recollection of some of those frugal and economical maxims which, about the beginning of the last century (England's meanest period), were endeavoured to be inculcated and instilled into the breasts of the London Apprentices* by a class of instructors who might not inaptly be termed "The Masters of Mean Morals." The astonishing narrowness and illiberality of the lessons contained in some of those books is inconceivable by those whose studies have not led them that way, and would almost induce one to subscribe to the hard censure which Drayton has passed upon the mercantile spirit :—

> The gripple merchant, born to be the curse
> Of this brave isle.

I have now lying before me that curious book by Daniel Defoe, "The Complete English Tradesman." The pompous detail, the studied analysis of every little mean art, every sneaking address, every trick and subterfuge, short of larceny, that is necessary to the tradesman's occupation, with the hundreds of anecdotes, dialogues (in Defoe's liveliest manner) interspersed, all tending to the same amiable purpose,—namely, the sacrificing of every honest emotion of the soul to what he calls the main chance,—if you read it in an *ironical sense*, and as a piece of *covered satire*, make it one of the most amusing books which Defoe ever writ, as much so as any of his best novels. It is difficult to say what his intention was in writing it. It is almost impossible to suppose him in earnest. Yet such is the bent of the book to narrow and to degrade the heart, that if such maxims were as catching and infectious as those of a licentious cast, which happily is not the case, had I been living at that time, I certainly should have recommended to the Grand Jury of Middlesex, who presented "The Fable of the Bees," to have presented this book of Defoe's in preference, as of a far more vile and debasing tendency. I will give one specimen of his advice to the young tradesman on the *government of his temper:* "The retail tradesman in especial, and even every tradesman in his station, must furnish himself with a competent stock of patience. I mean that sort of patience which is needful to bear with all sorts of impertinence, and the most provoking curiosity that it is possible to imagine the buyers, even the worst of them, are, or can be, guilty of. *A tradesman behind his counter must have no flesh and blood about him, no passions, no resentment;* he must never be angry,—no, not so much as seem to be so, if a customer tumbles him five hundred pounds' worth of goods, and scarce bids money for anything; nay, though they really come to his shop with no intent to buy, as many do, only to see what is to be sold, and though he knows they cannot be better pleased than they are at some other shop where they intend to buy, 'tis all one; the tradesman must take it; he must place it to the account of his calling, that *'tis his business to be ill used, and resent nothing;* and so must answer as obligingly to those that give him an

* This term designated a larger class of young men than that to which it is now confined. It took in the articled clerks of merchants and bankers, the George Barnwells of the day.

hour or two's trouble and buy nothing, as he does to those who, in half the time, lay out ten or twenty pounds. The case is plain; and if some do give him trouble, and do not buy, others make amends, and do buy; and as for the trouble, 'tis the business of the shop."

Here follows a most admirable story of a mercer, who by his indefatigable meanness, and more than Socratic patience under affronts, overcame and reconciled a lady, who, upon the report of another lady that he had behaved saucily to some third lady, had determined to shun his shop, but, by the over-persuasions of a fourth lady, was induced to go to it; which she does, declaring beforehand that she will buy nothing, but give him all the trouble she can. Her attack and his defence, her insolence and his persevering patience, are described in colours worthy of a Mandeville; but it is too long to recite. "The short inference from this long discourse," says he, "is this,—that here you see, and I could give you many examples like this, how and in what manner a shop-keeper is to behave himself in the way of his business; what impertinences, what taunts, flouts, and ridiculous things he must bear in his trade; and must not show the least return, or the least signal of disgust: he must have no passions, no fire in his temper; he must be all soft and smooth; nay, if his real temper be naturally fiery and hot, he must show none of it in his shop; he must be a perfect *complete hypocrite*, if he will be a *complete tradesman.** It is true, natural tempers are not to be always counterfeited: the man cannot easily be a lamb in his shop, and a lion in himself; but, let it be easy or hard, it must be done, and is done. There are men who have by custom and usage brought themselves to it, that nothing could be meeker and milder than they when behind the counter, and yet nothing be more furious and raging in every other part of life: nay, the provocations they have met with in their shops have so irritated their rage, that they would go upstairs from their shop, and fall into frenzies, and a kind of madness, and beat their heads against the wall, and perhaps mischief themselves, if not prevented, till the violence of it had gotten vent, and the passions abate and cool. I heard once of a shopkeeper that behaved himself thus to such an extreme, that when he was provoked by the impertinence of the customers beyond what his temper could bear, he would go upstairs and beat his wife, kick his children about like dogs, and be as furious for two or three minutes as a man chained down in Bedlam; and again, when that heat was over, would sit down, and cry faster than the children he had abused; and, after the fit, he would go down into the shop again, and be as humble, courteous, and as calm as any man whatever; so absolute a government of his passions had he in the shop, and so little out of it: in the shop, a soulless animal that would resent nothing; and in the family, a mad-man: in the shop, meek like a lamb; but in the family outrageous, like a Libyan lion. The sum of the matter is, it is necessary for a tradesman to subject himself, by all the ways possible, to his business; *his customers are to be his idols; so far as he may worship idols, by allowance, he is to bow down to them, and worship them;* at least he is not in any way to displease them, or show any disgust or distaste whatsoever they may say or do. The bottom of all is that he is intending to get money by them; and it is not for him that gets money to offer the least inconvenience to them by whom he gets it: he is to consider that," as Solomon says, "the borrower is servant to the lender; so the seller is servant to the buyer." What he says on the head of "Pleasures and Recreations" is not less amusing: "The tradesman's pleasure should be in his business; his companions should be in his books" (he means his ledger, waste-book, &c.), "and if he has a family he makes his excursion supstairs and no farther. None of my cautions aim at restraining a tradesman from diverting

* As no qualification accompanies this maxim, it must be understood as the genuine sentiment of the author!

himself, as we call it, with his fireside, or keeping company with his wife and children." Liberal allowance! nay, almost licentious and criminal indulgence! But it is time to dismiss this Philosopher of Meanness. More of this stuff would illiberalize the pages of the *Reflector*. Was the man in earnest, when he could bring such powers of description, and all the charms of natural eloquence, in commendation of the meanest, vilest, wretchedest degradations of the human character? or did he not rather laugh in his sleeve at the doctrines which he inculcated; and, retorting upon the grave citizens of London their own arts, palm upon them a sample of disguised satire under the name of wholesome instruction?

# On the Melancholy of Tailors.

Sedet, æternumque sedebit,
Infelix Theseus. VIRGIL.

THAT there is a professional melancholy, if I may so express myself, incident to the occupation of a tailor, is a fact which I think very few will venture to dispute. I may safely appeal to my readers, whether they ever knew one of that faculty that was not of a temperament, to say the least, far removed from mercurial or jovial.

Observe the suspicious gravity of their gait. The peacock is not more tender, from a consciousness of his peculiar infirmity, than a gentleman of this profession is of being known by the same infallible testimonies of his occupation. "Walk, that I may know thee."

Do you ever see him go whistling along the foot-path like a carman, or brush through a crowd like a baker, or go smiling to himself like a lover? Is he forward to thrust into mobs, or to make one at the ballad-singer's audiences? Does he not rather slink by assemblies and meetings of the people, as one that wisely declines popular observation?

How extremely rare is a noisy tailor! a mirthful and obstreperous tailor!

"At my nativity," says Sir Thomas Browne, "my ascendant was the earthly sign of Scorpius; I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me." One would think that he were anatomizing a tailor! save that to the latter's occupation, methinks, a woollen planet would seem more consonant, and that he should be born when the sun was in Aries.—He goes on. "I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardize of company." How true a type of the whole trade! Eminently economical of his words, you shall seldom hear a jest come from one of them. He sometimes furnishes subject for a rapartee, but rarely (I think) contributes one *ore proprio*.

Drink itself does not seem to elevate him, or at least to call out of him any of the external indications of vanity. I cannot say that it never causes his pride to swell, but it never breaks out. I am even fearful that it may swell and rankle to an alarming degree inwardly. For pride is near of kin to melancholy;—a hurtful obstruction from the ordinary outlets of vanity being shut. It is this stoppage which engenders proud humours. Therefore a tailor may be proud. I think he is never vain. The display of his gaudy patterns in that book of his

which emulates the rainbow, never raises any inflations of that emotion in him, corresponding to what the wig-maker (for instance) evinces, when he expatiates on a curl or a bit of hair. He spreads them forth with a sullen incapacity for pleasure, a real or affected indifference to grandeur. Cloth of gold neither seems to elate, nor cloth of frieze to depress him—according to the beautiful motto which formed the modest impress of the shield worn by Charles Brandon at his marriage with the king's sister. Nay, I doubt whether he would discover any vain-glorious complacence in his colours, though "Iris" herself "dipt the woof."

In further corroboration of this argument—who ever saw the wedding of a tailor announced in newspapers, or the birth of his eldest son?

When was a tailor known to give a dance, or to be himself a good dancer, or to perform exquisitely on the tight rope, or to shine in any such light and airy pastimes? to sing, or play on the violin?

Do they much care for public rejoicings, lightings up, ringing of bells, firing of cannons, &c.?

Valiant I know they can be; but I appeal to those who were witnesses to the exploits of Eliot's famous troop, whether in their fiercest charges they betrayed anything of that thoughtless oblivion of death with which a Frenchman jigs into battle, or whether they did not show more of the melancholy valour of the Spaniard, upon whom they charged; that deliberate courage which contemplation and sedentary habits breathe?

Are they often great newsmongers? I have known some few among them arrive at the dignity of speculative politicians; but that light and cheerful every-day interest in the affairs and goings-on of the world, which makes the barber* such delightful company, I think is rarely observable in them.

This characteristic pensiveness in them being so notorious, I wonder none of those writers, who have expressely treated of melancholy, should have mentioned it. Burton, whose book is an excellent abstract of all the authors in that kind who preceded him, and who treats of every species of this malady, from the *hypochondriacal* or *windy* to the *heroical* or *love melancholy* has strangely omitted it. Shakspere himself has overlooked it. "I have neither the scholar's melancholy (saith Jacques), which is emulation; nor the courtier's, which is proud; nor the soldier's, which is politic; nor the lover's, which is all these:"—and then, when you might expect him to have brought in, "nor the tailor's, which is so and so"—he comes to an end of his enumeration, and falls to a defining of his own melancholy.

Milton likewise has omitted it, where he had so fair an opportunity of bringing it in, in his *Penseroso.*

But the partial omissions of historians proving nothing against the existence of any well-attested fact, I shall proceed and endeavour to ascertain the causes why this pensive turn should be be so predominant in people of this profession above all others.

And first, may it not be, that the custom of wearing apparel being derived to us from the Fall, and one of the most mortifying products of that unhappy

* Having incidentally mentioned the barber, in a comparison of professional temperaments, I hope no other trade will take offence, or look upon it as an incivility to them, if I say, that in courtesy, humanity, and all the conversational and social graces which "gladden life," I esteem no profession comparable to his. Indeed so great is the good-will which I bear to this useful and agreeable body of men, that, residing in one of the Inns of Court (where the best specimens of them are to be found, except perhaps at the Universities) there are seven of them to whom I am personally known, and who never pass me without the compliment of the hat on either side. My truly polite and urbane friend, Mr. A——m, of Flower-de-luce Court, in Fleet Street, will forgive my mention of him in particular. I can truly say, that I never spent a quarter of an hour under his hands without deriving some profit from the agreeable discussions which are always going on there.

event, a certain *seriousness* (to say no more of it) may in the order of things have been intended to be impressed upon the minds of that race of men to whom in all ages the care of contriving the human apparel has been entrusted,—to keep up the memory of the first institution of clothes, and serve as a standing remonstrance against those vanities, which the absurd conversion of a memorial of our shame into an ornament of our persons was destined to produce? Correspondent in some sort to this, it may be remarked, that the tailor sitting over a cave or hollow place, in the cabalistic language of his order, is said to have *certain melancholy regions* always open under his feet. But waiving further inquiry into final causes, where the best of us can only wonder in the dark, let us try to discover the efficient causes of this melancholy.

I think, then, that they may be reduced to two, omitting some surbordinate ones, viz:—

The sedentary habits of the tailor,

Something peculiar in his diet.—

First, his *sedentary habits.*—In Dr. Norris's famous narrative of the frenzy of Mr. John Dennis, the patient, being questioned as to the occasion of the swelling in his legs, replies that it came "by criticism:" to which the learned doctor seeming to demur, as to a distemper which he had never heard of, Dennis (who appears not to have been mad upon all subjects) rejoins with some warmth, that it was no distemper, but a noble art! that he had sat fourteen hours a day at it: and that the other was a pretty doctor not to know that there was a communication between the brain and the legs.

When we consider that this sitting for fourteen hours continuously, which the critic probably practised only while he was writing his "remarks," is no more than what the tailor, in the ordinary pursuance of his art, submits to daily (Sundays excepted) throughout the year, shall we wonder to find the brain affected, and in a manner over-clouded, from that indissoluble sympathy between the noble and less noble parts of the body, which Dennis hints at? The unnatural and painful manner of his sitting must also greatly aggravate the evil, insomuch that I have sometimes ventured to liken tailors at their boards to so many envious Junos, *sitting cross-legged to hinder the birth of their own felicity.* The legs transversed thus ⨯ cross-wise, or decussated, was among the ancients the posture of malediction. The Turks, who practise it at this day, are noted to be a melancholy people.

Secondly, his *diet.*—To which purpose I find a most remarkable passage in Burton, in his chapter entitled "Bad diet a cause of melancholy." "Amongst herbs to be eaten (he says) I find gourds, cucumbers, melons, disallowed; but especially CABBAGE. It causeth troublesome dreams, and sends up black vapours to the brain. Galen, *loc. affect.* lib. 3, cap. 6, of all herbs condemns CABBAGE. And Isaack, lib. 2, cap. 1, *animæ gravitatem facit*, it brings heaviness to the soul." I could not omit so flattering a testimony from an author, who, having no theory of his own to serve, has so unconsciously contributed to the confirmation of mine. It is well known that this last-named vegetable has, from the earliest periods which we can discover, constituted almost the sole food of this extraordinary race of people.—BURTON, Junior.

# The Londoner.

I WAS born under the shadow of St. Dunstan's steeple, just where the conflux of the eastern and western inhabitants of this twofold city meet and jostle in friendly opposition at Temple Bar. The same day which gave me to the world saw London happy in the celebration of her great annual feast. This I cannot help looking upon as a lively omen of the future great good-will which I was destined to bear toward the city, resembling in kind that solicitude which every Chief Magistrate is supposed to feel for whatever concerns her interests and well-being. Indeed I consider myself in some sort a speculative Lord Mayor of London; for though circumstances unhappily preclude me from the hope of ever arriving at the dignity of a gold chain and Spital Sermon, yet thus much will I say of myself in truth, that Whittington with his Cat (just emblem of vigilance and a furred gown) never went beyond me in affection, which I bear to the citizens.

I was born, as you have heard, in a crowd. This has begot in me an entire affection for that way of life, amounting to an almost insurmountable aversion from solitude and rural scenes. This aversion was never interrupted or suspended, except for a few years in the younger part of my life, during a period in which I had set my affections upon a charming young woman. Every man while the passion is upon him, is for a time at least addicted to groves and meadows and purling streams. During this short period of my existence, I contracted just familiarity enough with rural *objects* to understand tolerably well ever after the *poets*, when they declaim in such passionate terms in favour of a country life.

For my own part, now the fit is past, I have no hesitation in declaring, that a mob of happy faces crowding up at the pit door of Drury Lane Theatre, just at the hour of six, gives me ten thousand sincerer pleasures, than I could ever receive from all the flocks of silly sheep that ever whitened the plains of Arcadia or Epsom Downs.

This passion for crowds is nowhere feasted so full as in London. The man must have a rare *recipe* for melancholy, who can be dull in Fleet Street. I am naturally inclined to hypochondria, but in London it vanishes, like all other ills. Often, when I have felt a weariness or distaste at home, have I rushed out into her crowded Strand, and fed my humour, till tears have wetted my cheek for inutterable sympathies with the multitudinous moving picture, which she never fails to present at all hours, like the scenes of a shifting pantomime.

The very deformities of London, which give distaste to others, from habit do not displease me. The endless succession of shops where *Fancy mis-called Folly* is supplied with perpetual gauds and toys, excite in me no puritanical aversion. I gladly behold every appetite supplied with its proper food. The obliging customer, and the obliged tradesman—things which live by bowing, and things which exist but for homage—do not affect me with disgust; from habit I perceive nothing but urbanity, where other men, more refined, discover meanness: I love the very smoke of London, because it has been the medium most familiar to my vision. I see grand principles of honour at work in the dirty ring which encompasses two combatants with fists, and principles of no less eternal justice in the detection of a pick-pocket. The salutary astonishment with which an execution is surveyed, convinces me more forcibly than a hundred volumes of abstract polity, that the universal instinct of man in all ages has leaned to order and good government.

Thus an art of extracting morality from the commonest incidents of a town life, is attained by the same well-natured alchemy, with which the Foresters of Arden, in a beautiful country,

> Found tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

Where has spleen her food but in London? Humour, Interest, Curiosity, suck at her measureless breasts without a possibility of being satiated. Nursed amid her noise, her crowds, her beloved smoke, what have I been doing all my life, if I have not lent out my heart with usury to such scenes!

## Wordsworth's "Excursion."

(The *Quarterly Review*, October, 1814.)

[Charles Lamb's intense admiration for the genius of Wordsworth, and his unaffected delight upon reading an early presentation copy of "The Excursion" can alone account for his excessive magnanimity in having ever undertaken to review it in the pages of the *Quarterly*. The article as it actually appeared, and as it is here reprinted, from vol. xii., pp. 100-111, the agonized writer himself described as having had "the eyes pulled out and the bleeding sockets left." It was, in truth, so hacked and maimed editorially by William Gifford, as to be scarcely recognizable. The marvel is that Lamb should ever have dreamt of contributing to pages in which only three years previously the editor of the *Quarterly*, in reviewing Weber's edition of the works of Ford, the dramatist, in allusion to Charles Lamb's "Specimens of the Dramatic Poets," had said, with frightful coarseness, "He (Weber) has polluted his pages with the blasphemies of a poor maniac, who, it seems, once published some detached scenes of the *Broken Heart*. For this unfortunate creature every feeling mind will find an apology in his calamitous situation; but for Mr. Weber, we know not where the warmest of his friends will seek either palliation or excuse." On Southey's remonstrating, in a letter addressed to Mr. Murray, couched in terms of burning expostulation upon allusions of such astounding brutality, Gifford, as editor, and as writer of the article, protested, with an exaggerated emphasis, "I call God to witness that in the whole course of my life I never heard one syllable of Mr. Lamb and his family, I knew not that he ever had a sister. I declare in the most solemn manner that all I ever knew or ever heard of Mr. Lamb was merely his name. Had I been aware of one of the circumstances which you mention, I would have lost my right arm sooner than have written what I have." Accepting these asseverations, the appalling extravagance of the language, applied to one whose name merely had never previously been heard of, and of whose surroundings the critic protests with an oath that he had no knowledge whatever, is, to say the least of it, matter only for the most profound amazement. Charles Lamb, though pained at the time beyond expression by an outrage so wild and wanton, may be said to have condoned it by contributing, three years afterwards, this very paper on Wordsworth's "Excursion" to the *Quarterly*, having probably received in good faith the editor's astonishing explanation. However this may have been, his trust in Gifford only subjected him, as the event proved, to another anguish. On seeing how cruelly his article had been dealt with—decapitated, quartered, and disembowelled—he wrote to Wordsworth, "I cannot give you an idea of what he has done to it. The *language* he has altered throughout. Whatever inadequateness it had to its subject, it was, in point of composition, the prettiest piece of prose I ever writ. That charm, if it had any, is all gone; more than a third of the substance is cut away, and that not all from one place, but *passim*, so as to make utter nonsense. Every warm expression is changed for a nasty cold one." And so forth. No wonder, putting it in the mildest phrase possible under the circumstances, he said that he never felt more vexed in his life than on reading it. Yet all his revenge was writing a sarcastic sonnet dated St. Crispin's Eve, and headed "St. Crispin to Mr. Gifford," in which, with a final allusion to the stretching-leather of his brain, the great critic was reminded, if not of the *ne sutor*

axiom, of his own honourable rise to the judiciat chair of the *Quarterly*, from the humble bench of a shoemaker.]

THE volume before us, as we learn from the Preface, is "a detached portion of an unfinished poem, containing views of man, nature, and society;" to be called the Recluse, as having for its principal subject the "sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement;" and to be preceded by a "record in verse of the origin and progress of the author's own powers, with reference to the fitness which they may be supposed to have conferred for the task." To the completion of this plan we look forward with a confidence which the execution of the finished part is well calculated to inspire.—Meanwhile, in what is before us there is an ample matter for entertainment: for the "Excursion" is not a branch (as might have been suspected) prematurely plucked from the parent tree to gratify an overhasty appetite for applause; but is, in itself, a complete and legitimate production.

It opens with the meeting of the poet with an aged man whom he had known from his schooldays; in plain words, a Scottish pedlar; a man who, though of low origin, had received good learning and impressions of the strictest piety from his stepfather, a minister and village schoolmaster. Among the hills of Athol, the child is described to have become familiar with the appearances of nature in his occupation as a feeder of sheep; and from her silent influences to have derived a character, meditative, tender, and poetical. With an imagination and feelings thus nourished—his intellect not unaided by books, but those, few, and chiefly of a religious cast—the necessity of seeking a maintenance in riper years, had induced him to make choice of a profession, the *appellation* for which has been gradually declining into contempt, but which formerly designated a class of men, who, journeying in country places, when roads presented less facilities for travelling, and the intercourse between towns and villages was unfrequent and hazardous, became a sort of link of neighbourhood to distant habitations; resembling, in some small measure, in the effects of their periodical returns, the caravan which Thomson so feelingly describes as blessing the cheerless Siberian in its annual visitation, with "news of human kind."

In the solitude incident to this rambling life, power had been given him to keep alive that devotedness to nature which he had imbibed in his childhood, together with the opportunity of gaining such notices of persons and things from his intercourse with society, as qualified him to become a "teacher of moral wisdom. With this man, then, in a hale old age, released from the burthen of his occupation, yet retaining much of its active habits, the poet meets, and is by him introduced to a second character—a sceptic—one who had been partially roused from an overwhelming desolation, brought upon him by the loss of wife and children, by the powerful incitement of hope which the French Revolution in its commencement put forth, but who, disgusted with the failure of all its promises, had fallen back into a laxity of faith and conduct which induced at length a total despondence as to the dignity and final destination of bis species. In the language of the poet, he

> ———broke faith with those whom he had laid
> In earth's dark chambers.

Yet be describes himself as subject to compunctious visitations from that silent quarter.

> ———Feebly must they have felt, etc.—p. 133.

The conversations which this person, in which the Wanderer asserts the consolatory side of the question against the darker views of human life maintained by his friend, and finally calls to his assistance the experience of a village priest, the third, or rather fourth interlocutor, (for the poet himself is one), form the groundwork of the "Excursion."

It will be seen by this sketch that the poem is of a didactic nature, and not a fable or story; yet it is not wanting in stories of the most interesting kind,—such as the lovers of Cowper and Goldsmith will recognize as something familiar and congenial to them. We might instance the Ruined Cottage, and the Solitary's own story, in the first half of the work; and the second half, as being almost a continued cluster of narration. But the prevailing charm of the poem is, perhaps, that conversational as it is in its plan, the dialogue throughout is carried on in the very heart of the most romantic scenery which the poet's native hills could supply; and which, by the perpetual references made to it either in the way of illustration or for variety and pleasurable description's sake, is brought before us as we read. We breathe in the fresh air, as we do while reading Walton's Complete Angler; only the country about us is as much bolder than Walton's, as the thoughts and speculations, which form the matter of the poem, exceed the trifling pastime and low-pitched conversation of his humble fishermen. We give the description of the "two huge peaks," which from some other vale peered into that in which the Solitary is entertaining the poet and his companion. "Those," says their host,

> ————————if here you dwelt, would be
> Your prized companions, etc.—p. 84.

To a mind constituted like that of Mr. Wordsworth, the stream, the torrent, and the stirring leaf—seem not merely to suggest associations of deity, but to be a kind of speaking communication with it. He walks through common forests, as through some Dodona or enchanted wood; and every casual bird that flits upon the boughs, like that miraculous one* in Tasso, but in language more piercing than any articulate sounds, reveals to him far higher love-lays. In his poetry nothing in nature is dead. Motion is synonymous with life. "Beside yon spring," says the Wanderer, speaking of a deserted well, from which, in former times, a poor woman, who died heart-broken, had been used to dispense refreshment to the thirsty traveller,

> ————————beside yon spring I stood, etc.—p. 27.

To such a mind, we say—call it strength or weakness—if weakness, assuredly a fortunate one—the visible and audible things of creation present, not dim symbols, or curious emblems, which they have done at all times to those who have been gifted with the poetical faculty; but revelations and quick insights into the life within us, the pledge of immortality:—

> ————————the whispering air
> Sends inspiration from her shadowy heights,
> And blind recesses of the cavern'd rocks:
> The little rills, and waters numberless,
> Inaudible by daylight.

"I have seen," the poet says, and the illustration is a happy one:

> ————————I have seen
> A curious child, applying to his ear
> The convolutions of a smooth-lipp'd shell, etc.—p. 191.

Sometimes this harmony is imaged to us by an echo; and in one instance,

* With parti-coloured plumes, and purple bill,
A wondrous bird among the rest there flew,
That in plain speech sung love-lays loud and shrill;
Her leden was like human language true;
So much she talk'd, and with such wit and skill,
That strange it seemèd how much good she knew.
*Fairfax's Translation.*

it is with such transcendent beauty set forth by a shadow and its corresponding substance, that it would be a sin to cheat our readers at once of so happy an illustration of the poet's system, and so fair a proof of his descriptive powers.

Thus having reach'd a bridge that over-arch'd, etc.—p. 407.

Combinations, it is confessed, "like those reflected in that quiet pool," cannot be lasting: it is enough for the purpose of the poet, if they are felt. They are at least his system; and his readers, if they reject them for their creed, may receive them merely as poetry. In him, *faith*, in friendly alliance and conjunction with the religion of his country, appears to have grown up, fostered by meditation and lonely communions with Nature—an internal principle of lofty consciousness, which stamps upon his opinions and sentiments (we were almost going to say) the character of an expanded and generous Quakerism.

From such a creed we should expect unusual results; and, when applied to the purposes of consolation, more touching considerations than from the mouth of common teachers. The finest speculation of this sort perhaps in the poem before us, is the notion of the thoughts which may sustain the spirit, while they crush the frame of the sufferer, who from loss of objects of love by death, is commonly supposed to pine away under a broken heart.

———If there be, whose tender frames have droop'd, etc.—p. 148.

With the same modifying and incorporating power, he tells us,—

Within the soul a faculty abides, etc.—p. 188.

This is high poetry; though (as we have ventured to lay the basis of the author's sentiments in a sort of liberal Quakerism) from some parts of it, others may, with more plausibility, object to the appearance of a kind of natural Methodism: we could have wished therefore* that the tale of Margaret had been postponed, till the reader had been strengthened by some previous acquaintance with the author's theory, and not placed in the front of the poem, with a kind of ominous aspect, beautifully tender as it is. It is a tale of a cottage, and its female tenant, gradually decaying together, while she expected the return of one whom poverty and not unkindness had driven from her arms. We trust ourselves only with the conclusion—

————nine tedious years
From their first separation, nine long years, etc.—p. 46.

The fourth book, entitled "Despondency Corrected," we consider as the most valuable portion of the poem. For moral grandeur; for wide scope of thought and a long train of lofty imagery; for tender personal appeals; and a *versification* which we feel we ought to notice, but feel it also so involved in the poetry, that we can hardly mention it as a distinct excellence; it stands without competition among our didactic and descriptive verse. The general tendency of the argument (which we might almost affirm to be the leading moral of the poem) is to abate the pride of the calculating *understanding*, and to reinstate the *imagination* and the *affections* in those seats from which modern philosophy has laboured but too successfully to expel them.

"Life's autumn past," says the grey-haired Wanderer,

————I stand on winter's verge, etc.—p. 168.

In the same spirit, those illusions of the imaginative faculty to which the

* ["The reasons for postponing it," wrote Lamb to Wordsworth, "are as deducible from what goes before as they are from the 104th Psalm. The passage whence I deduced it has vanished, but clapping a colon before a *therefore* is always reason enough for Mr. Baviad Gifford to allow to a reviewer that is not himself."]

peasantry in solitary districts are peculiarly subject, are represented as the kindly ministers of *conscience :*

> — ———with whose service charged
> They come and go, appear and disappear;
> Diverting evil purposes, remorse
> Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief,
> Or pride of heart abating.

Reverting to the more distant ages of the world, the operation of that same faculty in producing the several fictions of Chaldean, Persian, and Grecian idolatry, is described with such seductive power, that the Solitary, in good earnest, seems alarmed at the tendency of his own argument. Notwithstanding his fears, however, there is one thought so uncommonly fine, relative to the spirituality which lay hid beneath the gross material forms of Greek worship, in metal or stone, that we cannot resist the allurement of transcribing it—

> ————Triumphant o'er this pompous show, etc.—p. 174.

In discourse like this the first day passes away. The second (for this almost dramatic poem takes up the action of two summer days) is varied by the introduction of the village priest ; to whom the Wanderer resigns the office of chief speaker, which had been yielded to his age and experience on the first. The conference is begun at the gate of the churchyard; and after some natural speculations concerning death and immortality—and the custom of funereal and sepulchral observances, as deduced from a feeling of immortality—certain doubts are proposed respecting the quantity of moral worth existing in the world, and in that mountainous district in particular. In the resolution of these doubts, the priest enters upon a most affecting and singular strain of narration, derived from the graves around him. Pointing to hillock after hillock, he gives short histories of their tenants, disclosing their humble virtues, and touching with tender hand upon their frailties.

Nothing can be conceived finer than the manner of introducing these tales. With heaven above his head, and the mouldering turf at his feet—standing betwixt life and death—he seems to maintain that spiritual relation which he bore to his living flock, in its undiminished strength, even with their ashes; and to be in his proper cure, or diocese, among the dead.

We might extract powerful instances of pathos from these tales—the story of Ellen in particular—but their force is in combination, and in the circumstances under which they are introduced. The traditionary anecdote of the Jacobite and Hanoverian, as less liable to suffer by transplanting, and as affording an instance of that finer species of humour, that thoughtful playfulness in which the author more nearly perhaps than in any other quality resembles Cowper, we shall lay at least a part of it before our readers. It is the story of a whig who, having wasted a large estate in election contests, retired "beneath a borrowed name" to a small town among these northern mountains, where a Caledonian laird, a follower of the house of Stuart, who had fled his country after the overthrow at Culloden, returning with the return of lenient times, had also fixed his residence.

> ————————Here, then, they met,
> Two doughty champions; flaming Jacobite, etc—p. 270–73.

The causes which have prevented the poetry of Mr. Wordsworth from attaining its full share of popularity are to be found in the boldness and originality of his genius. The times are past when a poet could securely follow the direction of his own mind into whatever tracts it might lead. A writer, who would be popular, must timidly coast the shore of prescribed sentiment and sympathy. He must have just as much more of the imaginative faculty than his readers, as will serve to keep their apprehensions from stagnating, but not so much as to alarm their jealousy. He must not think or feel too deeply.

If he has had the fortune to be bred in the midst of the most magnificent objects of creation, he must not have given away his heart to them; or if he have, he must conceal his love, or not carry his expressions of it beyond that point of rapture, which the occasional tourist thinks it not overstepping decorum to betray, or the limit which that gentlemanly spy upon Nature, the picturesque traveller, has vouchsafed to countenance. He must do this, or be content to be thought an enthusiast.

If from living among simple mountaineers, from a daily intercourse with them, not upon the footing of a patron, but in the character of an equal, he has detected, or imagines that he has detected, through the cloudy medium of their unlettered discourse, thoughts and apprehensions not vulgar; traits of patience and constancy, love unwearied, and heroic endurance, not unfit (as he may judge) to be made the subject of verse, he will be deemed a man of perverted genius by the philanthropist who, conceiving of the peasantry of his country only as objects of a pecuniary sympathy, starts at finding them elevated to a level of humanity with himself, having their own loves, enmities, cravings, aspirations, &c., as much beyond his faculty to believe, as his beneficence to supply.

If from a familiar observation of the ways of children, and much more from a retrospect of his own mind when a child, he has gathered more reverential notions of that state than fall to the lot of ordinary observers, and, escaping from the dissonant wranglings of men, has tuned his lyre, though but for occasional harmonies, to the milder utterance of that soft age,—his verses shall be censured as infantile by critics who confound poetry "having children for its subject" with poetry that is "childish," and who, having themselves perhaps never been *children*, never having possessed the tenderness and docility of that age, know not what the soul of a child is—how apprehensive! how imaginative! how religious!

We have touched upon some of the causes which we conceive to have been unfriendly to the author's former poems. We think they do not apply in the same force to the one before us. There is in it more of uniform elevation, a wider scope of subject, less of manner, and it contains none of those starts and imperfect shapings which in some of this author's smaller pieces offended the weak, and gave scandal to the perverse. It must indeed be approached with seriousness. It has in it much of that quality which "draws the devout, deterring the profane." Those who hate the Paradise Lost will not love this poem. The steps of the great master are discernible in it; not in direct imitation or injurious parody, but in the following of the spirit, in free homage and generous subjection.

One objection it is impossible not to foresee. It will be asked, why put such eloquent discourse in the mouth of a pedlar? It might be answered that Mr. Wordsworth's plan required a character in humble life to be the organ of his philosophy. It was in harmony with the system and scenery of his poem. We read Piers Plowman's Creed, and the lowness of the teacher seems to add a simple dignity to the doctrine. Besides, the poet has bestowed an unusual share of education upon him. Is it too much to suppose that the author, at some early period of his life, may himself have known such a person, a man endowed with sentiments above his situation, another Burns; and that the dignified strains which he has attributed to the Wanderer may be no more than recollections of his conversation, heightened only by the amplification natural to poetry, or the lustre which imagination flings back upon the objects and companions of our youth? After all, if there should be found readers willing to admire the poem, who yet feel scandalized at a *name*, we would advise them, wherever it occurs, to substitute silently the word *Palmer*, or *Pilgrim*, or any less offensive designation, which shall connect the notion of sobriety in heart and manners with the experience and privileges which a wayfaring life confers.

# The Reynolds Gallery.

(*The Examiner*, 6th June, 1813.)

THE Reynolds Gallery has, upon the whole, disappointed me. Some of the portraits are interesting. They are faces of characters whom we (middle-aged gentlemen) were born a little too late to remember, but about whom we have heard our fathers tell stories till we almost fancy to have seen them. There is a charm in the portrait of a Rodney or a Keppel, which even a picture of Nelson must want for me. I should turn away after a slight inspection from the best likeness that could be made of Mrs. Anne Clarke; but Kitty Fisher is a considerable personage. Then the dresses of some of the women so exactly remind us of modes which we can just recall; of the forms under which the venerable relationship of aunt or mother first presented themselves to our young eyes; the aprons, the coifs, the lappets, the hoods. Mercy on us! what a load of head ornaments seem to have conspired to bury a pretty face in the picture of Mrs. Long, *yet could not!* Beauty must have some "charmed life" to have been able to surmount the conspiracy of fashion in those days to destroy it.

The portraits which least pleased me were those boys as infant Bacchuses, Jupiters, &c. But the artist is not to be blamed for the disguise. No doubt the parents wished to see their children deified in their lifetime. It was but putting a thunderbolt (instead of a squib) into young master's hands; and a whey-faced chit was transformed into the infant ruler of Olympus,—him who was afterward to shake heaven and earth with his black brow. Another good boy pleased his grandmamma so well, and the blameless dotage of the good old woman imagined in him an adequate representative of the awful Prophet Samuel. *But the great historical compositions, where the artist was at liberty* to paint from *his own idea,—the Beaufort and the Ugolino:* why then, I must confess, pleading the liberty of table talk for my presumption, that they have not left any very elevating impression on my mind. Pardon a ludicrous comparison. I know, madam, you admire them both; but placed opposite to each other as they are at the gallery, as if to set the one work in competition with the other, they did remind me of the famous contention for the prize of deformity, mentioned in the 173d Number of the *Spectator*. The one stares, and the other grins; but is there common dignity in their countenances? Does anything of the history of their life gone by peep through the ruins of the mind in the face, like the unconquerable grandeur that surmounts the distortions of the Laocoön? The figures which stand by the bed of Beaufort are indeed happy representations of the plain unmannered old nobility of the English historical plays of Shakspere; but, for anything else;—Give me leave to recommend those macaroons.

After leaving the Reynolds Gallery (where, upon the whole, I received a good deal of pleasure), and feeling that I had quite had my fill of paintings, I stumbled upon a picture in Piccadilly (No. 22, I think), which purports to be a portrait of Francis the First, by Leonardo da Vinci. Heavens, what a difference! It is but a portrait, as most of those I had been seeing; but, placed by them, it would kill them, swallow them up as Moses' rod the other rods. Where did these old painters get their models? I see no figures, not in my dreams, as this Francis, in the character, or rather with the attributes, of John the Baptist. A more than martial majesty in the brow and upon the eyelid; an arm, mus-

cular, beautifully formed; the long, graceful, massy fingers compressing, yet so as not to hurt, a lamb more lovely, more sweetly shrinking, than we can conceive that milk-white one which followed Una; the picture altogether looking as if it were eternal,—combining the truth of flesh with a promise of permanence like marble.

Leonardo, from the one or two specimens we have of him in England, must have been a stupendous genius. I can scarce think he has had his full fame—he who could paint that wonderful personification of the Logos, or second person of the Trinity, grasping a globe, late in the possession of Mr. Troward of Pall Mall, where the hand was, by the boldest licence, twice as big as the truth of drawing warranted; yet the effect, to every one that saw it, by some magic of genius was confessed to be not *monstrous*, but *miraculous* and *silencing*. It could not be gainsaid.

## Richard Brome's "Jovial Crew."

(*The Examiner*, 4th July, 1819.)

[This and the three subsequent papers were first identified as Lamb's, thanks to the industrious researches of Mr. Herne Shepherd.]

THE *Jovial Crew*, or the *Merry Beggars*, has been revived here [at the English opera] after an interval, as the bills tell us, of seven years. Can it be so long (it seems but yesterday) since we saw poor Lovegrove in Justice Clack? His childish treble still pipes in our ears; "Whip 'em, whip 'em, whip 'em." Dowton was the representative of the Justice the other night, and shook our ribs most incontinently. He was in "excellent foolery," and our lungs crowed chanticleer. Yet it appears to us that there was a still higher strain of fatuity in his predecessor—that his eyes distilled a richer dotage. Perhaps, after all, it was an error of the memory. Defunct merit comes out upon us strangely.

Easy natural Wrench was the Springlove; too comfortable a personage perhaps to personify Springlove, in whom the voice of the bird awakens a restless instinct of roaming that had slept during the winter. Miss Stevenson certainly leaves us nothing to regret for the absence of the lady, however agreeable, who formerly performed the part of Meriel. Miss Stevenson is a fine open-countenanced lass, with glorious girlish manners. But the Princess of Mumpers, and Lady Paramount of beggarly counterfeit accents, was *she* that played Rachel. Her gabbling lachrymose petitions; her tones, such as we have heard by the side of old woods, when an irresistible face has come peeping on one on a sudden; with her full black locks, and a *voice*—how shall we describe it?—a voice that was by nature meant to convey nothing but truth and goodness, but warped by circumstance into an assurance that she is telling us a lie—that catching twitch of the thievish irreprovable finger—those ballad-singers' notes, so vulgar, yet so unvulgar—that assurance so like impudence and yet so many countless leagues removed from it—her jeers, which we had rather stand, than be caressed with other ladies' compliments, a summer's day long—her face, with a wild out-of-doors grace upon it——

Altogether, a brace of more romantic she-beggars it was never our fortune to meet in this supplicatory world. The youngest might have sat for "pretty Bessy," whose father was an Earl, and whose legend still adorns the front of mine hostess's doors at Bethnal-Green; and the other could be no less than

the "Beggar Maid" whom "King Cophetua wooed." "What a lass that were," said a stranger who sate beside us, speaking of Miss Kelly in Rachel, "to go a-gypsying through the world with." We confess we longed to drop a tester in her lap, she begged so masterly.

By-the-way, this is the true *Beggar's Opera.* The other should have been called the *Mirror for Highwaymen.* We wonder the Societies for the Suppression of Mendicity (and other good things) do not club for the putting down of this infamous protest in favour of air, and clear liberty, and honest licence, and blameless assertion of man's original blest charter of blue skies, and vagrancy, and nothing-to-do.

# Isaac Bickerstaff's "Hypocrite."

(*The Examiner*, 1st August, 1819.)

By one of those strange perversions which actuate poor mortals in the place of motives (to persuade us into the notion that we are free agents, we presume), we had never till the other evening seen Dowton [at the English Opera] in Doctor Cantwell. By a pious fraud of Mr. Arnold's, who by a process as simple as some of those by which Mathews metamorphoses his person, has converted the play into an opera,—a conversion, by-the-way, for which we are highly indebted to him,—we have been favoured with this rich novelty at our favourite theatre. It seems a little unreasonable to come lagging in with a posthumous testimony to the merits of a performance of which the town has long rung, but we cannot help remarking in Mr. Dowton's acting, the subtle *gradations* of the hypocrisy; the length to which it runs in proportion as the recipient is capable of taking it in; the gross palpable way in which he administers the dose in wholesale to old Lady Lambert, that rich fanatic; the somewhat more guarded manner in which he retails it out, only so much a time as he can bear, to the somewhat less bitten fool her son; and the almost absence of it before the younger members of the family, when nobody else is by; how the cloven foot peeps out a little and a little more, till the diabolical nature is stung out at last into full manifestation of its horrid self. What a grand insolence in the tone which he assumes, when he commands Sir John to quit *his* house; and then the tortures and agonies when he is finally baffled! It is in these last perhaps that he is greatest, and we should be doing injustice not to compare this part of the performance with, and in some respects to give it the preference above, the acting of Mr. Kean, in a situation nearly analogous, at the conclusion of the *City Madam.* Cantwell reveals his pangs with quite as much force, and without the assistance of those contortions which transform the detected Luke into the similitude of a mad tiger, or a foaming demon. Dowton plays it neither like beast nor demon, but simply as it should be, a bold bad man pushed to extremity. Humanity is never once overstepped. Has it ever been noticed, the exquisite modulation with which he drawls out the word "Charlès," when he calls his secretary, so humble, so seraphic, so resigned. The most diabolical of her sex that we ever knew accented all her honey devil words in just such a hymn-like smoothness. The spirit of Whitfield seems hovering in the air, to suck the blessed tones

so much like his own upon earth; Lady Huntingdon claps her neat white wings, and gives it out again in heaven to the sainted ones, in approbation.

Miss Kelly is not quite at home in Charlotte; she is too good for such parts. Her cue is to be natural; she cannot put on the modes of artificial life, and play the coquette as it is expected to be played. There is a frankness in her tones which defeats her purposes; we could not help wondering why her lover (Mr. Pearman) looked so rueful; we forgot that she was acting airs and graces, as she seemed to forget it herself, turning them into a playfulness which could breed no doubt for a moment which way her inclinations ran. She is in truth not framed to tease or torment even in jest, but to utter a hearty *Yes* or *No;* to yield or refuse assent with a noble sincerity. We have not the pleasure of being acquainted with her, but we have been told that she carries the same cordial manners into private life. We have heard, too, of some virtues which she is in the practice of; but they are of a description which repay themselves, and with them neither we nor the public have anything to do.

One word about Wrench who played the Colonel:—Was this man never unhappy? It seems as if care never came near him, as if the black ox could never tread upon his foot; we want something calamitous to befall him, to bring him down to us. It is a shame he should be suffered to go about with his well-looking happy face and tones insulting us thin race of irritable and irritable-making critics.

# New Pieces at the Lyceum.

(*The Examiner*, 8th August, 1819.)

[Prefixed to this criticism by Charles Lamb was the following editorial note from the hand of Leigh Hunt.]

[WE must make the public acquainted with a hard case of ours. Here had we been writing a long, elaborate, critical, and analytical account of the new pieces at the Lyceum, poring over the desk for two hours in the morning after a late night, and melting away what little had been left of our brains and nerves from the usual distillation of the week, when an impudent rogue of a friend, whose most daring tricks and pretences carry as good a countenance with them as virtues in any other man, and who has the face above all to be a better critic than ourselves, sends us the following remarks of his own on those two very pieces. What do we do? The self-love of your inferior critic must vent itself somehow; and so we take this opportunity of showing our virtue at the expense of our talents, and fairly making way for the interloper.

Dear, nine, closely-written octavo pages! you were very good, after all, between you and me; and should have given way to nobody else. If there is room left, a piece of you shall be got in at the end; for virtue is undoubtedly its own reward, but not quite.]

A plot has broke out at this theatre. Some quarrel has been breeding between the male and female performers, and the women have determined to set up for

themselves. Seven of them, *Belles without Beaux* they call themselves, have undertaken to get up a piece without any assistance from the men, and in our opinion have established their point most successfully. There is Miss Carew with her silvery tones, and Miss Stevenson with her delicious mixture of the school-girl and the waiting-maid, and Miss Kelly, sure to be first in any mischief, and Mrs. Chatterly, with some of the best acting we have ever witnessed, and Miss Love, worthy of the *name*, and Mrs. Grove that rhymes to her, and Mrs. Richardson who might in charity have been allowed somewhat a larger portion of the dialogue. The effect was enchanting. We mean for once. We do not want to encourage these Amazonian vanities. Once or twice we longed to have Wrench bustling among them. A lady who sate near us was observed to gape for want of variety. To us it was delicate quintessence, an apple-pie made all of quinces. We remember poor Holcroft's last comedy, which positively died from the opposite excess; it was choked up with men, and perished from a redundancy of male population. It had nine principal men characters in it, and but one woman, and she of no very ambiguous character. Mrs. Harlow, to do the part justice, chose to play it in scarlet.

We did not know Mrs. Chatterly's merits before; she plays, with downright sterling good acting, a prude who is to be convinced out of her prudery by Miss Kelly's (we did not catch her stage name) assumption of the dress and character of a brother of seventeen, who makes the prettiest unalarming platonic approaches; and in the shyest mark of moral battery, no one step of which you can detect, or say *this* is decidedly going too far, vanquishes at last the ice of her scruples, brings her into an infinite scrape, and then with her own infinite good humour sets all to right, and brings her safe out of it again with an explanation. Mrs. Chatterly's embarrassments were masterly. Miss Stevenson her maid's start at surprising a youth in her mistress's closet at midnight, was quite as good. Miss Kelly we do not care to say anything about, because we have been accused of flattering her. The truth is, this lady puts so much intelligence and good sense into every part which she plays, that there is no expressing an honest sense of her merits, without incurring a suspicion of that sort. But what have we to gain by praising Miss Kelly?

Altogether, this little feminine republic, this provoking experiment, went off most smoothly. What a nice world it would be, we sometimes think, *all women!* but then we are afraid, we slip in a fallacy unawares into the hypothesis; we somehow edge in the idea of ourselves as spectators or something among them.

We saw Wilkinson after it in *Walk for a Wager*. What a picture of forlorn hope! of abject orphan destitution! he seems to have no friends in the world but his legs, and he plies them accordingly. He goes walking on like a perpetual motion. His continual ambulatory presence performs the part of a Greek chorus. He is the walking gentleman of the piece; a peripatetic that would make a stoic laugh. He made us cry. His Muffincap in *Amateurs and Actors* is just such another piece of acting. We have seen charity boys, both of St. Clement's and Farringdon Without, looking just as old, ground down out of all semblance of youth, by abject and hopeless neglect—you cannot guess their age between fifteen and fifty. If Mr. Peake is the author of these pieces, he has no reason to be piqued at their reception.

We must apologize for an oversight in our last week's article. The allusion made to Mr. Kean's acting of Luke in the *City Madam* was totally inapplicable to the part and to the play. We were thinking of his performance of the concluding scenes of *The New Way to Pay Old Debts.* We confounded one of Massinger's strange heroes with the other. It was Sir Giles Overreach we meant; nor are we sure that our remark was just, even with this explanation. When we consider the intense tone in which Mr. Kean thinks it proper (and he is quite as likely to be in the right as his blundering critic) to pitch the tem-

perament of that monstrous character from the beginning, it follows but logically and naturally, that where the wild uncontrollable man comes to be baffled of his purpose, his passion should assume a frenzied manner, which it was altogether absurd to expect should be the same with the manner of the cautious and self-restraining Cantwell, even when he breaks loose from all bonds in the agony of his final exposure. We never felt more strongly the good sense of the saying—comparisons are odious. They betray us not seldom into bitter errors of judgment; and sometimes, as in the present instance, into absolute matter-of-fact blunders. But we have recanted.

# First-fruits of Australian Poetry.

(*The Examiner*, 16th January, 1820.)

[The little volume of verse here passed under review, and which was announced at the head of the criticism to have been published in Sydney, New South Wales, and printed for private distribution, was generally understood among Charles Lamb's friends, to have been the production of his old intimate, Barron Field, sometime resident at the antipodes as a judge in Australia.]

> I first adventure; follow me who list:
> And be the second Austral harmonist.

WHOEVER thou art that hast transplanted the British wood-notes to the far-off forests which the Kangaroo haunts—whether thou art some involuntary exile that solaces his sad estrangement with recurrence to his native notes, with more wisdom than those captive Hebrews of old refused to sing their Sion songs in a strange land—or whether, as we rather suspect, thou art that valued friend of ours, who, in thy young time of life, together with thy faithful bride, thy newly "wedded flower," didst, in obedience to the stern voice of duty, quit thy friends, thy family, thy pleasing avocations, the Muses with which thou wert as deeply smitten as any, we believe, in our age and country, to go and administer tedious justice in inauspicious unliterary THIEFLAND,* we reclaim thee for our own, and gladly would transport thee back to thy native "fields," and studies congenial to thy habits.

We know a merry captain, and co-navigator with Cook, who prides himself upon having planted the first pun in Otaheite. It was in their own language, and the islanders first looked at him, then stared at one another, and all at once burst out into a genial laugh. It was a stranger, and as a stranger they gave it welcome. Many a quibble of their own growth, we doubt not, has since sprung from that well-timed exotic. Where puns flourish, there must be no inconsiderable advance in civilization. The same good results we are willing to augur from this dawn of refinement at Sydney. They were beginning to have something like a theatrical establishment there, which we are sorry to hear has been suppressed; for we are of opinion with those who think that a

* An elegant periphrasis for *the Bay.* Mr. Coleridge led us the way—"Cloudland, gorgeous land."

taste for such kind of entertainments is one remove at least from profligacy, and that Shakspere and Gay may be as safe teachers of morality as the ordinary treatises which assume to instil that science. We have seen one of their play-bills (while the thing was permitted to last), and were affected by it in no ordinary degree, particularly in the omission of the titles of honour, which in this country are condescendingly conceded to the players. In their Dramatis Personæ, *Jobson* was played by Smith ; *Lady Loverule*, Jones; *Nell*, Wilkinson : gentlemen and lady performers alike curtailed of their fair proportions. With a little patronage, we prophesy, that in a very few years the histrionic establishment of Sydney would have risen in respectability; and the humble performers would, by tacit leave or open permission, have been allowed to use the same encouraging affixes to their names, which dignify their prouder brethren and sisters in the mother country. What a moral advancement, what a lift in the scale, to a Braham or a Stephens of New South Wales, to write themselves *Mr.* and *Miss!* The King here has it not in his power to do so much for a commoner, no, not though he dub him a Duke.

The "First Fruits" consist of two poems. The first celebrates the plant *epacris grandiflora;* but we are no botanists, and perhaps there is too much matter mixed up in it from the *Midsummer Night's Dream* to please some readers. The thefts are indeed so open and palpable, that we almost recur to our first surmise, that the author must be some unfortunate wight, sent on his travels for plagiarisms of a more serious complexion. But the old matter and the new blend kindly together, and must, we hope, have proved right acceptable to more than one

——— ——Among the fair
Of that young land of Shakspere's tongue.

We select for our readers the second poem; and are mistaken if it does not relish of the graceful hyperboles of our elder writers. We can conceive it to have been written by Andrew Marvell, supposing him to have been banished to Botany Bay, as he did, we believe, once meditate a voluntary exile to Bermuda. See his fine poem, "Where the remote Bermudas ride."

## Elia to his Correspondents.

(*The London Magazine*, November, 1821.)

A CORRESPONDENT, who writes himself Peter Ball, or Bell,—for his handwriting is as ragged as his manners,—admonishes me of the old saying, that some people (under a courteous periphrasis, I slur his less ceremonious epithet) had need have good memories. In my "Old Benchers of the Inner Temple," I have delivered myself, and truly, a Templar born. Bell clamours upon this, and thinketh that he hath caught a fox. It seems that, in a former paper, retorting upon a weekly scribbler who had called my good identity in question (see Postscript to my "Chapter on Ears"), I profess myself a native of some spot near Cavendish Square, deducing my remoter origin from Italy. But who does not see, except this tinkling cymbal, that, in the idle fiction of Genoese ancestry I was answering a fool according to his folly,—that Elia there ex-

presseth himself ironically as to an approved slanderer, who hath no right to the truth, and can be no fit recipient of it? Such a one it is usual to leave to his delusions; or, leading him from error still to contradictory error, to plunge him, as we say, deeper in the mire, and give him line till he suspend himself. No understanding reader could be imposed upon by such obvious rhodomontade to suspect me for an alien, or believe me other than English.

To a second correspondent, who signs himself "A Wiltshire Man," and claims me for a countryman upon the strength of an equivocal phrase in my "Christ's Hospital," a more mannerly reply is due. Passing over the Genoese fable, which Bell makes such a ring about, he nicely detects a more subtle discrepancy, which Bell was too obtuse to strike upon. Referring to the passage, I must confess that the term "native town," applied to Calne, *primâ facie* seems to bear out the construction which my friendly correspondent is willing to put upon it. The context too, I am afraid, a little favours it. But where the words of an author, taken literally, compared with some other passage in his writings, admitted to be authentic, involve a palpable contradiction, it hath been the custom of the ingenuous commentator to smoothe the difficulty by the supposition that in the one case an allegorical or tropical sense was chiefly intended. So, by the word "native," I may be supposed to mean a town where I might have been born, or where it might be desirable that I should have been born, as being situate in wholesome air, upon a dry, chalky soil, in which I delight; or a town with the inhabitants of which I passed some weeks, a summer or two ago, so agreeably that they and it became in a manner native to me. Without some such latitude of interpretation in the present case, I see not how we can avoid falling into a gross error in physics, as to conceive that a gentleman may be born in two places, from which all modern and ancient testimony is alike abhorrent. Bacchus cometh the nearest to it, whom I remember Ovid to have honoured with the epithet "twice born."* But, not to mention that he is so called (we conceive) in reference to the places *whence* rather than the places *where* he was delivered,—for, by either birth, he may probably be challenged for a Theban,—in a strict way of speaking, he was a *filius femoris* by no means in the same sense as he had been before a *filius alvi;* for that latter was but a secondary and tralatitious way of being born, and he but a denizen of the second house of his geniture. Thus much by way of explanation was thought due to the courteous "Wiltshire Man."

To "Indagator," "Investigator," "Incertus," and the rest of the pack, that are so importunate about the true localities of his birth,—as if, forsooth, Elia were presently about to be passed to his parish,—to all such churchwarden critics he answereth, that, any explanation here given notwithstanding, he hath not so fixed his nativity (like a rusty vane) to one dull spot, but that, if he seeth occasion, or the argument shall demand it, he will be born again, in future papers, in whatever place, and at whatever period, shall seem good unto him.

"Modo me Thebis, modo Athenis."

* Imperfectus adhuc infans genetricis ab alvo
Eripitur, patrioque tener (si credere dignum)
Insuitur femori. . . . .
Tutaque bis geniti sunt incunabula Bacchi.
*Metamorph.*, lib. iii.

# The Gentle Giantess.

(*The London Magazine*, December, 1822.)

THE widow Blacket, of Oxford, is the largest female I ever had the pleasure of beholding. There may be her parallel upon the earth; but surely I never saw it. I take her to be lineally descended from the maid's aunt of Brainford, who caused Master Ford such uneasiness. She hath Atlantean shoulders; and, as she stoopeth in her gait,—with as few offences to answer for in her own particular as any one of Eve's daughters,—her back seems broad enough to bear the blame of all the peccadilloes that have been committed since Adam. She girdeth her waist—or what she is pleased to esteem as such—nearly up to her shoulders; from beneath which that huge dorsal expanse, in mountainous declivity, emergeth. Respect for her alone preventeth the idle boys, who follow her about in shoals, whenever she cometh abroad, from getting up and riding. But her presence infallibly commands a reverence. She is indeed, as the Americans would express it, something awful. Her person is a burthen to herself no less than to the ground which bears her. To her mighty bone, she had a pinguitude withal, which makes the depth of winter to her the most desirable season. Her distress in the warmer solstice is pitiable. During the months of July and August, she usually renteth a cool cellar, where ices are kept, whereinto she descendeth when Sirius rageth. She dates from a hot Thursday,—some twenty-five years ago. Her apartment in summer is pervious to the four winds. Two doors, in north and south direction, and two windows, fronting the rising and the setting sun, never closed, from every cardinal point catch the contributory breezes. She loves to enjoy what she calls a quadruple draught. That must be a shrewd zephyr that can escape her. I owe a painful face-ache, which oppresses me at this moment, to a cold caught, sitting by her, one day in last July, at this receipt of coolness. Her fan, in ordinary, resembleth a banner spread, which she keepeth continually on the alert to detect the least breeze. She possesseth an active and gadding mind, totally incommensurate with her person. No one delighteth more than herself in country exercises and pastimes. I have passed many an agreeable holiday with her in her favourite park at Woodstock. She performs her part in these delightful ambulatory excursions by the aid of a portable garden-chair. She setteth out with you at a fair foot-gallop, which she keepeth up till you are both well-breathed, and then reposeth she for a few seconds. Then she is up again for a hundred paces or so, and again resteth; her movements, on these sprightly occasions, being something between walking and flying. Her great weight seemeth to propel her forward, ostrich-fashion. In this kind of relieved marching, I have traversed with her many scores of acres on those well-wooded and well-watered domains. Her delight at Oxford is in the public walks and gardens, where, when the weather is not too oppressive, she passeth much of her valuable time. There is a bench at Maudlin, or rather situated between the frontiers of that and ——'s College (some litigation, latterly, about repairs, has vested the property of it finally in ——'s), where, at the hour of noon, she is ordinarily to be found sitting,—so she calls it by courtesy,—but, in fact, pressing and breaking of it down with her enormous settlement; as both those foundations,—who, however, are good-natured enough to wink at it,—have found, I believe, to their cost. Here she taketh the fresh air, principally at vacation-times, when the walks are freest from interruption of the younger fry

of students. Here she passeth her idle hours, not idly, but generally accompanied with a book,—blessed if she can but intercept some resident Fellow (as usually there are some of that brood left behind at these periods), or stray Master of Arts (to most of them she is better known than their dinner bell), with whom she may confer upon any curious topic of literature. I have seen these shy gownsmen, who truly set but a very slight value upon female conversation, cast a hawk's eye upon her from the length of Maudlin Grove, and warily glide off into another walk,—true monks as they are; and urgently neglecting the delicacies of her polished converse for their own perverse and uncommunicating solitariness! Within-doors, her principal diversion is music, vocal and instrumental; in both which she is no mean professor. Her voice is wonderfully fine; but till I got used to it, I confess it staggered me. It is, for all the world, like that of a piping bullfinch; while, from her size and stature, you would expect notes to drown the deep organ. The shake, which most fine singers reserve for the close or cadence, by some unaccountable flexibility, or tremulousness of pipe, she carrieth quite through the composition; so that her time, to a common air or ballad, keeps double motion, like the earth,—running the primary circuit of the tune, and still revolving upon its own axis. The effect, as I said before, when you are used to it, is as agreeable as it is altogether new and surprising. The spacious apartment of her outward frame lodgeth a soul in all respects disproportionate. Of more than mortal make, she evinceth withal a trembling sensibility, a yielding infirmity of purpose, a quick susceptibility to reproach, and all the train of diffident and blushing virtues, which for their habitation usually seek out a feeble frame, an attenuated and meagre constitution. With more than man's bulk, her humours and occupations are eminently feminine. She sighs,—being six foot high. She languisheth,—being two feet wide. She worketh slender sprigs upon the delicate muslin,—her fingers being capable of moulding a Colossus. She sippeth her wine out of her glass daintily—her capacity being that of a tun of Heidelberg. She goeth mincingly with those feet of hers, whose solidity need not fear the black ox's pressure. Softest and largest of thy sex, adieu! By what parting attribute may I salute thee, last and best of the Titanesses,—Ogress, fed with milk instead of blood; not least, or least handsome, among Oxford's stately structures,—Oxford, who, in its deadest time of vacation, can never properly be said to be empty, having thee to fill it.

# On a Passage in "The Tempest."

(*The London Magazine*, November, 1823.)

["Nugæ Criticæ, No. II.," was the title of this paper when it originally appeared in the *London*. It was there published as a companion to the criticism "On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*," which had appeared in the preceding number of the magazine for October, though that contribution had been given without any heading of "Nugæ Criticæ, No. I."]

As long as I can remember the play of *The Tempest*, one passage in it has always set me upon wondering. It has puzzled me beyond measure. In vain I strove to find the meaning of it. I seemed doomed to cherish infinite, hopeless curiosity.

It is where Prospero, relating the banishment of Sycorax from Argier, adds :—

> For one thing that she did.
> They would not take her life.

How have I pondered over this when a boy! How have I longed for some authentic memoir of the witch to clear up the obscurity! Was the story extant in the chronicles of Algiers? Could I get at it by some fortunate introduction to the Algerine ambassador? Was a voyage thither practicable? The Spectator, I knew, went to Grand Cairo only to measure the pyramid. Was not the object of my quest of at least as much importance? The blue-eyed hag! could *she* have done anything good or meritorious? might that succubus relent? then might there be hope for the Devil. I have often admired since that none of the commentators have boggled at this passage; how they could swallow this camel,—such a tantalizing piece of obscurity, such an abortion of an anecdote.

At length I think I have lighted upon a clue which may lead to show what was passing in the mind of Shakspere when he dropped this imperfect rumour. In the "Accurate Description of Africa, by John Ogilby (folio), 1670," page 230, I find written as follows. The marginal title to the narrative is, "Charles the Fifth besieges Algier :"—

"In the last place, we will briefly give an account of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, when he besieged this city : and of the great loss he suffered therein.

"This prince, in the year one thousand five hundred forty-one, having embarqued upon the sea an army of twenty-two thousand men aboard eighteen galleys, and an hundred tall ships, not counting the barques and shallops, and other small boats, in which he had engaged the principal of the Spanish and Italian nobility, with a good number of the Knights of Malta; he was to land on the coasts of Barbary, at a cape called Matifou. From this place unto the city of Algier, a flat shore or strand extends itself for about four leagues, the which is exceeding favourable to galleys. There he put ashore with his army, and in a few days caused a fortress to be built, which unto this day is called the castle of the Emperor.

"In the meantime the city of Algier took the alarm, having in it at that time but eight hundred Turks, and six thousand Moors, poor-spirited men, and unexercised in martial affairs; besides it was at that time fortified only with walls, and had no outworks : insomuch that by reason of its weakness, and the great forces of the Emperor, it could not in appearance escape taking. In fine, it was attempted with such order, that the army came up to the very gates, where the Chevailer de Savignac, a Frenchman by nation, made himself remarkable above all the rest by the miracles of his valour. For having repulsed the Turks, who, having made a sally at the gate called Babason, and there desiring to enter along with them, when he saw that they shut the gate upon him, he ran his poniard into the same, and left it sticking deep therein. They next fell to battering the city by the force of cannon; which the assailants so weakened, that in that great extremity the defendants lost their courage, and resolved to surrender.

"But as they were thus intending, there was a witch of the town, whom the history does not name, which went to seek out Assam Aga, that commanded within, and prayed him to make it good yet nine days longer with assurance, that within that time he should infallibly see Algier delivered from that siege, and the whole army of the enemy dispersed so that Christians should be as cheap as birds. In a word, the thing did happen in the manner as foretold; for upon the twenty-first day of October, in the same year, there fell a continual rain upon the land, and so furious a storm at sea, that one might have seen

ships hoisted into the clouds, and in one instant again precipitated into the bottom of the water: insomuch that that same dreadful tempest was followed with the loss of fifteen galleys, and above an hundred other vessels; which was the cause why the Emperor, seeing his army wasted by the bad weather, pursued by a famine, occasioned by wrack of his ships, in which was the greatest part of his victuals and ammunition, he was constrained to raise the siege, and set sail for Sicily, whither he retreated with the miserable reliques of his fleet.

"In the meantime that witch being acknowledged the deliverer of Algier, was richly remunerated, and the credit of her charms authorized. So that ever since, witchcraft hath been very freely tolerated; of which the chief of the town, and even those who are esteemed to be of greatest sanctity among them, such as are the Marabous, a religious order of their sects, do for the most part make profession of it, under a goodly pretext of certain revelations which they say they have had from their prophet, Mahomet.

"And hereupon those of Algier, to palliate the shame and the reproaches that are thrown upon them for making use of a witch in the danger of this siege, do say that the loss of the forces of Charles V. was caused by a prayer of one of their Marabous, named Cidy Utica, which was at that time in great credit, not under the notion of a magician, but for a person of a holy life. Afterwards in remembrance of their success, they have erected unto him a small mosque without the Babason gate, where he is buried, and in which they keep sundry lamps burning in honour of him: nay, they sometimes repair thither to make their *sala*, for a testimony of greater veneration."

Can it be doubted, for a moment, that the dramatist had come fresh from reading some *older narrative* of this deliverance of Algier by a witch, and transferred the merit of the deed to his Sycŏrax, exchanging only the "rich remuneration," which did not suit his purpose, to the simple pardon of her life? Ogilby wrote in 1670; but the authorities to which he refers for his account of Barbary are Johannes de Leo or Africanus, Louis Marmol, Diego de Haedo, Johannes Gramaye, Braeves, Cel. Curio, and Diego de Torres, names totally unknown to me, and to which I beg leave to refer the curious reader for his fuller satisfaction.

# Original Letter of James Thomson.

(*The London Magazine*, November, 1824.)

[Another of Charles Lamb's ingenious hoaxes.]

[The following very interesting letter has been recovered from oblivion, or at least from neglect, by our friend Elia, and the public will no doubt thank him for the deed. It is without date or superscription in the manuscript, which (as our contributor declares) was in so "fragmentitious" a state as to perplex his transcribing faculties in the extreme. The poet's love of nature is quite evident from one part of it; and the "poetical posture of his affairs" from another. Whether regarded as elucidating the former or the latter, it is a document not a little calculated to excite the attention of the curious as well as the critical. We could ourselves write an essay-full of conjectures from the grounds it affords

both with respect to the author's poems and his pride. But we must take another opportunity, or leave it to his next biographer.]

DEAR SIR,—I would chide you for the slackness of your correspondence; but having blamed you wrongeously (*sic* in MS.) last time, I shall say nothing till I hear from you, which, I hope, will be soon.

There's a little business I would communicate to you before I come to the more entertaining part of our correspondence.

I'm going (hard task) to complain, and beg your assistance. When I came up here I brought very little money with me; expecting some more upon the selling of Widehope, which was to have been sold that day my mother was buried. Now it is unsold yet, but will be disposed of as soon as can be conveniently done; though indeed it is perplexed with some difficulties. I was a long time living here at my own charges, and you know how expensive that is; this, together with the furnishing of myself with clothes, linen, one thing and another, to fit me for any business of this nature here, necessarily obliged me to contract some debts. Being a stranger, it is a wonder how I got any credit; but I cannot expect it will be long sustained, unless I immediately clear it. Even now, I believe it is at a crisis—my friends have no money to send me till the land is sold; and my creditors will not wait till then. You know what the consequence would be. Now the assistance I would beg of you, and which I know, if in your power, you will not refuse me, is a letter of credit on some merchant, banker, or such like person in London, for the matter of twelve pounds, till I get money upon the selling of the land, which I am at last certain of, if you could either give it me yourself or procure it; though you owe it not to my merit, yet you owe it to your own nature, which I know so well as to say no more upon the subject; only allow me to add, that when I first fell upon such a project (the only thing I have for it in my present circumstances), knowing the selfish inhumane temper of the generality of the world, you were the first person that offered to my thoughts, as one to whom I had the confidence to make such an address.

Now I imagine you are seized with a fine romantic kind of melancholy on the fading of the year—now I figure you wandering, philosophical and pensive, amidst brown withered groves; whiles the leaves rustle under your feet, the sun gives a farewell parting gleam, and the birds

> Stir the faint note, and but attempt to sing.

Then again, when the heavens wear a gloomy aspect, the winds whistle and the waters spout, I see you in the well-known cleugh, beneath the solemn arch of tall, thick, embowering trees, listening to the amusing lull of the many steep, moss-grown cascades; while deep, divine contemplation, the genius of the place, prompts each swelling, awful thought. I am sure you would not resign your place in that scene at an easy rate,—none ever enjoyed it to the height you do, and you are worthy of it. There I walk in spirit and disport in its beloved gloom. This country I am in is not very entertaining—no variety but that of woods, and these we have in abundance. But where is the living stream? the airy mountain? or the hanging rock? with twenty other things that elegantly please the lover of nature. Nature delights me in every form. I am just now painting her in her most luxurious dress; for my own amusement, describing winter as it presents itself. After my first proposal of the subject —

> I sing of winter and his gelid reign;
> Nor let a rhyming insect of the spring
> Deem it a barren theme, to me 'tis full
> Of manly charms; to me who court the shade,
> Whom the gay seasons suit not, and who shun
> The glare of summer. Welcome, kindred gloom!
> Drear awful wintry horrors, welcome all! &c.

After this introduction, I say, which insists for a few lines further, I prosecute the purport of the following ones :—

> Nor can I, O departing Summer ! choose
> But consecrate one pitying line to you ;
> Sing your last temper'd days and sunny balm
> That cheer the spirits and serene the soul.

Then terrible floods, and high winds, that usually happen about this time of the year, and have already happened here (I wish you have not felt them too dreadfully); the first produced the enclosed lines; the last are not completed. Mr. Rickleton's poem on Winter, which I still have, first put the design into my head—in it are some masterly strokes that awakened me—being only a present amusement it is ten to one but I drop it whenever another fancy comes across. I believe it had been much more for your entertainment if in this letter I had cited other people instead of myself—but I must refer that till another time. If you have not seen it already, I have just now in my hands an original of Sir Alexander Brands (the crazed Scots knight of the woful countenance), you would relish. I believe it might make Mis* John catch hold of his knees, which I take in him to be a degree of mirth only inferior to fall back again with an elastic spring. It is very [here a word is waggishly obliterated] printed in the *Evening Post ;* so perhaps you have seen these panegyrics of our declining bard; one on the Princess's birthday; the other on his Majesty's, in [obliterated] cantos : they are written in the spirit of a complicated craziness. I was lately in London a night, and in the old playhouse saw a comedy acted, called *Love makes a Man, or the Fop's Fortune,* where I beheld Miller and Cibber shine to my infinite entertainment. In and about London this month of September, near a hundred people have died by accident and suicide. There was one blacksmith tired of the hammer, who hung himself, and left written behind him this concise epitaph—

> I, Joe Pope,
> Lived without hope,
> And died by a rope,

or else some epigrammatic Muse has belied him.

Mr. Muir has ample fund for politics in the present posture of affairs, as you will find by the public news. I should be glad to know that great minister's frame just now. Keep it to yourself—you may whisper it too in Mis John's ear. Far otherwise is his lately mysterious brother, Mr. Tait, employed. Started a superannuated fortune and just now upon the full scent. It is comical enough to see him amongst the rubbish of his controversial divinity and politics, furbishing up his ancient rusty gallantry.

Yours sincerely, J. T

Remember me to all friends, Mr. Rickle, Mis John, Br. John, &c.

* *Mas ?*

# Letter to an Old Gentleman whose Education has been Neglected.

(*The London Magazine*, January, 1825.)

*To the Editor of the London Magazine.*

DEAR SIR,—I send you a bantering "Epistle to an Old Gentleman whose Education is supposed to have been neglected." Of course, it was *suggested* by some letters of your admirable Opium-Eater, the discontinuance of which has caused so much regret to myself in common with most of your readers. You will do me injustice by supposing that, in the remotest degree, it was my intention to ridicule those papers. The fact is, the most serious things may give rise to an innocent burlesque; and, the more serious they are, the fitter they become for that purpose. It is not to be supposed that Charles Cotton did not entertain a very high regard for Virgil, notwithstanding he travestied that poet. Yourself can testify the deep respect I have always held for the profound learning and penetrating genius of our friend. Nothing upon earth would give me greater pleasure than to find that he has not lost sight of his entertaining and instructive purpose.

I am, dear Sir, yours and *his* sincerely,

ELIA.

MY DEAR SIR,—The question which you have done me the honour to propose to me, through the medium of our common friend, Mr. Grierson, I shall endeavour to answer with as much exactness as a limited observation and experience can warrant.

You ask,—or rather Mr. Grierson, in his own interesting language, asks for you,—"Whether a person at the age of sixty-three, with no more proficiency than a tolerable knowledge of most of the characters of the English alphabet at first sight amounts to, by dint of persevering application and good masters, a docile and ingenuous disposition on the part of the pupil always presupposed, —may hope to arrive, within a presumable number of years, at that degree of attainments which shall entitle the possessor to the character, which you are on so many accounts justly desirous of acquiring, of a *learned man*."

This is fairly and candidly stated,—only I could wish that on one point you had been a little more explicit. In the meantime, I will take it for granted, that by a "knowledge of the alphabetic characters" you confine your meaning to the single powers only, as you are silent on the subject of the diphthongs and harder combinations.

Why, truly, sir, when I consider the vast circle of sciences,—it is not here worth while to trouble you with the distinction between learning and science, which a man must be understood to have made the tour of in these days, before the world will be willing to concede to him the title which you aspire to,—I am almost disposed to reply to your inquiry by a direct answer in the negative.

However, where all cannot be compassed, a great deal that is truly valuable may be accomplished. I am unwilling to throw out any remarks that should

have a tendency to damp a hopeful genius; but I must not, in fairness, conceal from you that you have much to do. The consciousness of difficulty is sometimes a spur to exertion. Rome—or rather, my dear sir, to borrow an illustration from a place as yet more familiar to you, Rumford—Rumford was not built in a day.

Your mind as yet, give me leave to tell you, is in the state of a sheet of white paper. We must not blot or blur it over too hastily. Or, to use an opposite simile, it is like a piece of parchment all bescrawled and bescribbled over with characters of no sense or import, which we must carefully erase and remove before we can make way for the authentic characters or impresses which are to be substituted in their stead by the corrective hand of science.

Your mind, my dear sir, again, resembles that same parchment, which we will suppose a little hardened by time and disuse. We may apply the characters; but are we sure that the ink will sink?

You are in the condition of a traveller that has all his journey to begin. And, again, you are worse off than the traveller which I have supposed; for you have already lost your way.

You have much to learn, which you have never been taught; and more, I fear, to unlearn, which you have been taught erroneously. You have hitherto, I dare say, imagined that the sun moves round the earth. When you shall have mastered the true solar system, you will have quite a different theory upon that point, I assure you. I mention but this instance. Your own experience, as knowledge advances, will furnish you with many parallels.

I can scarcely approve of the intention, which Mr. Grierson informs me you have contemplated, of entering yourself at a common seminary, and working your way up from the lower to the higher forms with the children. I see more to admire in the modesty than in the expediency of such a resolution. I own I cannot reconcile myself to the spectacle of a gentleman at your time of life, seated, as must be your case at first, below a tyro of four or five; for at that early age the rudiments of education usually commence in this country. I doubt whether more might not be lost in the point of fitness than would be gained in the advantages which you propose to yourself by this scheme.

You say you stand in need of emulation; that this incitement is nowhere to be had but at a public school; that you should be more sensible of your progress by comparing it with the daily progress of those around you. But have you considered the nature of emulation, and how it is sustained at these tender years which you would have to come in competition with? I am afraid you are dreaming of academic prizes and distinctions. Alas! in the university for which you are preparing, the highest medal would be a silver penny; and you must graduate in nuts and oranges.

I know that Peter, the Great Czar—or Emperor—of Muscovy, submitted himself to the discipline of a dockyard at Deptford, that he might learn, and convey to his countrymen, the noble art of shipbuilding. You are old enough to remember him, or at least the talk about him. I call to mind also other great princes, who, to instruct themselves in the theory and practice of war, and set an example of subordination to their subjects, have condescended to enrol themselves as private soldiers; and, passing through the successive ranks of corporal, quartermaster, and the rest, have served their way up to the station at which most princes are willing enough to set out,—of general and commander-in-chief over their own forces. But—besides that there is oftentimes great sham and pretence in their show of mock humility—the competition which they stooped to was with their coevals, however inferior to them in birth. Between ages so very disparate as those which you contemplate, I fear there can no salutary emulation subsist.

Again: in the other alternative, could you submit to the ordinary reproofs and discipline of a day-school? Could you bear to be corrected for your

faults? Or how would it look to see you put to stand, as must be the case sometimes, in a corner?

I am afraid the idea of a public school in your circumstances must be given up.

But is it impossible, my dear sir, to find some person of your own age,—if of the other sex, the more agreeable, perhaps,—whose information, like your own, has rather lagged behind his years, who should be willing to set out from the same point with yourself; to undergo the same tasks?—thus at once inciting and sweetening each other's labours in a sort of friendly rivalry. Such a one, I think, it would not be difficult to find in some of the western parts of this island,—about Dartmoor for instance.

Or what if, from your own estate,—that estate, which, unexpectedly acquired so late in life, has inspired into you this generous thirst after knowledge,—you were to select some elderly peasant, that might best be spared from the land, to come and begin his education with you, that you might till, as it were, your minds together,—one whose heavier progress might invite, without a fear of discouraging, your emulation? We might then see—starting from an equal post—the difference of the clownish and the gentle blood.

A private education, then, or such a one as I have been describing, being determined on, we must in the next place look out for a preceptor; for it will be some time before either of you, left to yourselves, will be able to assist the other to any great purpose in his studies.

And now, my dear sir, if, in describing such a tutor as I have imagined for you, I use a style a little above the familiar one in which I have hitherto chosen to address you, the nature of the subject must be my apology. *Difficile est de scientiis inscienter loqui;* which is as much as to say, that, "in treating of scientific matters, it is difficult to avoid the use of scientific terms." But I shall endeavour to be as plain as possible. I am not going to present you with the *ideal* of a pedagogue as it may exist in my fancy, or has possibly been realized in the persons of Buchanan and Busby. Something less than perfection will serve our turn. The scheme which I propose in this first or introductory letter has reference to the first four or five years of your education only; and in enumerating the qualifications of him that should undertake the direction of your studies, I shall rather point out the *minimum*, or *least*, that I shall require of him, than trouble you in the search of attainments neither common nor necessary to our immediate purpose.

He should be a man of deep and extensive knowledge. So much at least is indispensable. Something older than yourself, I could wish him, because years add reverence.

To his age and great learning, he should be blessed with a temper and a patience willing to accommodate itself to the imperfections of the slowest and meanest capacities. Such a one, in former days, Mr. Hartlib appears to have been; and such, in our days, I take Mr. Grierson to be: but our friend, you know, unhappily, has other engagements. I do not demand a consummate grammarian; but he must be a thorough master of vernacular orthography, with an insight into the accentualities and punctualities of modern Saxon, or English. He must be competently instructed (or how shall he instruct you?) in the tetralogy, or first four rules, upon which not only arithmetic, but geometry, and the pure mathematics themselves, are grounded. I do not require that he should have measured the globe with Cook or Ortelius; but it is desirable that he should have a general knowledge (I do not mean a very nice or pedantic one) of the great division of the earth into four parts, so as to teach you readily to name the quarters. He must have a genius capable in some degree of soaring to the upper element, to deduce from thence the not much dissimilar computation of the cardinal points, or hinges, upon which those invisible phenomena, which naturalists agree to term *winds*, do perpetually

shift and turn. He must instruct you, in imitation of the old Orphic fragments (the mention of which has possibly escaped you), in numeric and harmonious responses, to deliver the number of solar revolutions within which each of the twelve periods, into which the *Annus Vulgaris*, or common year, is divided, doth usually complete and terminate itself. The intercalaries and other subtle problems he will do well to omit, till riper years and course of study shall have rendered you more capable thereof. He must be capable of embracing all history, so as, from the countless myriads of individual men who have peopled this globe of earth,—*for it is a globe*,—by comparison of their respective births, lives, deaths, fortunes, conduct, prowess, &c., to pronounce, and teach you to pronounce, dogmatically and catechetically, who was the richest, who was the strongest, who was the wisest, who was the meekest, man that ever lived; to the facilitation of which solution, you will readily conceive, a smattering of biography would in no inconsiderable degree conduce. Leaving the dialects of men (in one of which I shall take leave to suppose you by this time at least superficially instituted), you will learn to ascend with him to the contemplation of that unarticulated language which was before the written tongue; and, with the aid of the elder Phrygian or Æsopic key, to interpret the sounds by which the animal tribes communicate their minds, evolving moral instruction with delight from the dialogue of cocks, dogs, and foxes. Or, marrying theology with verse, from whose mixture a beautiful and healthy offspring may be expected, in your own native accents (but purified), you will keep time together to the profound harpings of the more modern or Wattsian hymnics.

Thus far I have ventured to conduct you to a "hill-side whence you may discern the right path of a virtuous and noble education; laborious, indeed, at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming."*

With my best respects to Mr. Grierson when you see him, I remain, my dear Sir, your obedient servant, ELIA.

# A Vision of Horns.

(*The London Magazine*, January, 1825.)

MY thoughts had been engaged last evening in solving the problem, why in all times and places the *horn* has been agreed upon as the symbol, or honourable badge, of married men. Moses' horn, the horn of Ammon, of Amalthea, and a cornucopia of legends besides, came to my recollection, but afforded no satisfactory solution, or rather involved the question in deeper obscurity. Tired with the fruitless chase of inexplicant analogies, I fell asleep, and dreamed in this fashion:—

Methought certain scales or films fell from my eyes, which had hitherto hindered these little tokens from being visible. I was somewhere in the Cornhill (as it might be termed) of some Utopia. Busy citizens jostled each other,

* Milton's "Tractate on Education," addressed to Mr. Hartlib.

as they may do in our streets, with care (the care of making a penny) written upon their foreheads; and *something else*, which is rather imagined than distinctly imaged, upon the brows of my own friends and fellow-townsmen.

In my first surprise, I supposed myself gotten into some forest—Arden,—to be sure, or Sherwood; but the dresses and deportment, all civic, forbade me to continue in that delusion. Then a scriptural thought crossed me (especially as there were nearly as many Jews as Christians among them), whether it might not be the children of Israel going up to besiege Jericho. I was undeceived of both errors by the sight of many faces which were familiar to me. I found myself strangely (as it will happen in dreams) at one and the same time in an unknown country with known companions. I met old friends, not with new faces, but with their old faces oddly adorned in front, with each man a certain corneous excrescence. Dick Mitis, the little cheesemonger in St. ——'s Passage, was the first that saluted me, with his hat off (you know Dick's way to a customer); and, I not being aware of him, he thrust a strange beam into my left eye, which pained and grieved me exceedingly; but, instead of apology, he only grinned and fleered in my face, as much as to say, "It is the custom of the country," and passed on.

I had scarce time to send a civil message to his lady, whom I have always admired as a pattern of a wife, and do indeed take Dick and her to be a model of conjugal agreement and harmony, when I felt an ugly smart in my neck, as if something had gored it behind; and, turning round, it was my old friend and neighbour, Dulcet, the confectioner, who, meaning to be pleasant, had thrust his protuberance right into my nape, and seemed proud of his power of offending.

Now I was assailed right and left, till in my own defence I was obliged to walk sideling and wary, and look about me, as you guard your eyes in London streets; for the horns thickened, and came at me like the ends of umbrellas poking in one's face.

I soon found that these towns-folk were the civilest, best-mannered people in the world; and that, if they had offended at all, it was entirely owing to their blindness. They do not know what dangerous weapons they protrude in front, and will stick their best friends in the eye with provoking complacency. Yet the best of it is, they can see the beams on their neighbours' foreheads, if they are as small as motes; but their own beams they can in nowise discern.

There was little Mitis, that I told you I just encountered. He has simply (I speak of him at home in his own shop) the smoothest forehead in his own conceit. He will stand you a quarter of an hour together, contemplating the serenity of it in the glass, before he begins to shave himself in a morning; yet you saw what a desperate gash he gave me.

Desiring to be better informed of the ways of this extraordinary people, I applied myself to a fellow of some assurance, who (it appeared) acted as a sort of interpreter to strangers: he was dressed in a military uniform, and strongly resembled Col. ——, of the Guards. And "Pray, sir," said I, "have all the inhabitants of your city these troublesome excrescences? I beg pardon: I see you have none. You perhaps are single."—"Truly, sir," he replied with a smile, "for the most part we have, but not all alike. There are some, like Dick, that sport but one tumescence. Their ladies have been tolerably faithful,—have confined themselves to a single aberration or so: these we call Unicorns. Dick, you must know, is my Unicorn. [He spoke this with an air of invincible assurance.] Then we have Bicorns, Tricorns, and so on up to Millecorns. [Here methought I crossed and blessed myself in my dream.] Some again we have,—there goes one: you see how happy the rogue looks,—how he walks smiling, and perking up his face, as if he thought himself the only man. He is not married yet; but on Monday next he leads to the altar the accomplished widow Dacres, relict of our late sheriff."

"I see, sir, said I, and observe that he is happily free from the national *goître* (let me call it) which distinguishes most of your countrymen."

"Look a little more narrowly," said my conductor.

I put on my spectacles; and, observing the man a little more diligently, above his forehead I could mark a thousand little twinkling shadows dancing the hornpipe: little hornlets, and rudiments of horn, of a soft and pappy consistence (for I handled some of them), but which, like coral out of water, my guide informed me, would infallibly stiffen and grow rigid within a week or two from the expiration of his bachelorhood.

Then I saw some horns strangely growing out behind; and my interpreter explained these to be married men, whose wives had conducted themselves with infinite propriety since the period of their marriage, but were thought to have antedated their good men's titles, by certain liberties they had indulged themselves in, prior to the ceremony. This kind of gentry wore their horns backwards, as has been said, in the fashion of the old pigtails; and, as there was nothing obtrusive or ostentatious in them, nobody took any notice of it.

Some had pretty little budding antlers, like the first essays of a young fawn. These, he told me, had wives whose affairs were in a hopeful way, but not quite brought to a conclusion.

Others had nothing to show: only by certain red angry marks and swellings in the foreheads, which itched the more they kept rubbing and chafing them, it was to be hoped that something was brewing.

I took notice that every one jeered at the rest, only none took notice of the sea-captains; yet these were as well provided with their tokens as the best among them. This kind of people, it seems, taking their wives upon so contingent tenures, their lot was considered as nothing but natural: so they wore their marks without impeachment, as they might carry their cockades; and nobody respected them a whit the less for it.

I observed, that the more sprouts grew out of a man's head, the less weight they seemed to carry with them; whereas a single token would now and then appear to give the wearer some uneasiness. This shows that use is a great thing.

Some had their adornings gilt, which needs no explanation; while others, like musicians, went sounding theirs before them,—a sort of music which I thought might very well have been spared.

It was pleasant to see some of the citizens encounter between themselves; how they smiled in their sleeves at the shock they received from their neighbour, and none seemed conscious of the shock which their neighbour experienced in return.

Some had great corneous stumps, seemingly torn off and bleeding. These, the interpreter warned me, were husbands who had retaliated upon their wives, and the badge was in equity divided between them.

While I stood discerning these things, a slight tweak on my cheek unawares, which brought tears into my eyes, introduced to me my friend Placid, between whose lady and a certain male cousin some idle flirtations I remember to have heard talked of; but that was all. He saw he had somehow hurt me, and asked my pardon with that round, unconscious face of his; and looked so tristful and contrite for his no-offence, that I was ashamed for the man's penitence. Yet I protest it was but a scratch. It was the least little hornet of a horn that could be framed. "Shame on the man," I secretly exclaimed, "who could thrust so much as the value of a hair into a brow so unsuspecting and inoffensive! What then, must they have to answer for, who plant great, monstrous, timber-like, projecting antlers upon the heads of those whom they call their friends when a puncture of this atomical tenuity made my eyes to water at this rate! All the pincers at Surgeons' Hall cannot pull out for Placid that little hair."

I was curious to know what became of these frontal excrescences when the husbands died; and my guide informed me that the chemists in their country made a considerable profit by them, extracting from them certain subtile essences: and then I remembered that nothing was so efficacious in my own, for restoring swooning matrons, and wives troubled with the vapours, as a strong sniff or two at the composition appropriately called hartshorn, far beyond *sal volatile.*

Then also I began to understand why a man, who is the jest of the company, is said to be the butt,—as much as to say, such a one butteth with the horn.

I inquired if by no operation these wens were ever extracted; and was told that there was indeed an order of dentists, whom they call canonists in their language, who undertook to restore the forehead to its pristine smoothness; but that ordinarily it was not done without much cost and trouble; and when they succeeded in plucking out the offending part, it left a painful void, which could not be filled up; and that many patients who had submitted to the excision were eager to marry again, to supply with a good second antler the baldness and deformed gap left by the extraction of the former, as men losing their natural hair substitute for it a less becoming periwig.

Some horns I observed beautifully taper, smooth, and (as it were) flowering. These, I understand were the portions brought by handsome women to their spouses; and I pitied the rough, homely, unsightly deformities on the brows of others, who had been deceived by plain and ordinary partners. Yet the latter I observed to be by far the most common; the solution of which I leave to the natural philosopher.

One tribe of married men I particularly admired at, who, instead of horns, wore ingrafted on their forehead a sort of horn-book. "This," quoth my guide, "is the greatest mystery in our country, and well worth an explanation. You must know that all infidelity is not of the senses. We have as well intellectual as material wittols. These, whom you see decorated with the order of the book are triflers, who encourage about their wives' presence the society of your men of genius (their good friends, as they call them),—literary disputants, who ten to one out-talk the poor husband, and commit upon the understanding of the woman a violence and estrangement in the end, little less painful than the coarser sort of alienation. Whip me these knaves – [my conductor here expressed himself with a becoming warmth],—whip me them, I say, who, with no excuse from the passions, in cold blood seduce the minds, rather than the persons, of their friends' wives; who, for the tickling pleasure of hearing themselves prate, dehonestate the intellects of married women, dishonouring the husband in what should be his most sensible part. If I must be——[here he used a plain word] let it be by some honest sinner like myself, and not by one of these gad-flies, these debauchers of the understanding, these flattery-buzzers." He was going on in this manner, and I was getting insensibly pleased with my friend's manner (I had been a little shy of him at first), when the dream suddenly left me, vanishing, as Virgil speaks, through the gate of Horn.

# Biographical Memoir of Mr. Liston.

(*The London Magazine*, January, 1825.)

THE subject of our Memoir is lineally descended from Johan de L'Estonne (see "Domesday Book," where he is so written), who came in with the Conqueror, and had lands awarded him at Lupton Magna, in Kent. His particular merits or services, Fabian, whose authority I chiefly follow, has forgotten, or perhaps thought it immaterial, to specify. Fuller thinks that he was standard-bearer to Huog de Agmondesham, a powerful Norman baron, who was slain by the hand of Harold himself at the fatal battle of Hastings. Be this as it may, we find a family of that name flourishing some centuries later in that county. John Delliston, knight, was High Sheriff for Kent, according to Fabian, *quinto Henrici Sexti;* and we trace the lineal branch flourishing downwards,—the orthography varying, according to the unsettled usage of the times, from Delleston to Leston or Liston, between which it seems to have alternated, till, in the latter end of the reign of James I., it finally settled into the determinate and pleasing dissyllabic arrangement which it still retains. Aminadab Liston, the eldest male representative of the family of that day, was of the strictest order of Puritans. Mr. Foss, of Pall Mall, has obligingly communicated to me an undoubted tract of his, which bears the initials only, A. L., and is entitled, "The Grinning Glass, or Actor's Mirrour; wherein the vituperative Visnomy of Vicious Players for the Scene is as virtuously reflected back upon their mimetic Monstrosities as it has viciously (hitherto) vitiated with its vile Vanities her Votarists." A strange title, but bearing the impress of those absurdities with which the title-pages of that pamphlet-spawning age abounded. The work bears date 1617. It preceded the "Histriomastix" by fifteen years; and, as it went before it in time, so it comes not far short of it in virulence. It is amusing to find an ancestor of Liston's thus bespattering the players at the commencement of the seventeenth century:—

"Thinketh He" (the actor), "with his costive countenances, to wry a sorrowing soul out of her anguish, or by defacing the divine denotement of destinate dignity (daignely described in the face humane and no other) to reinstamp the Paradice-plotted similitude with a novel and naughty approximation (not in the first intention) to those abhorred and ugly God-forbidden correspondences, with flouting Apes' jeering gibberings, and Babion babbling-like to hoot out of countenance all modest measure, as if our sins were not sufficing to stoop our backs without He wresting and crooking his members to mistimed mirth (rather malice) in deformed fashion, leering when he should learn, prating for praying, goggling his eyes (better upturned for grace), whereas in Paradice (if we can go thus high for His professions) that devilish Serpent appeareth his undoubted Predecessor, first induing a mask like some roguish roistering Roscius (I spit at them all) to beguile with stage shows the gaping Woman, whose Sex hath still chiefly upheld these Mysteries, and are voiced to be the chief Stage-haunters, where, as I am told, the custom is commonly to mumble (between acts) apples, not ambiguously derived from that pernicious Pippin (worse in effect than the Apples of Discord), whereas sometimes the hissing sounds of displeasure, as I hear, do lively reintonate that snake-taking-leave, and diabolical goings off, in Paradice."

The Puritanic effervescence of the early Presbyterians appears to have abated

with time, and the opinions of the more immediate ancestors of our subject to have subsided at length into a strain of moderate Calvinism. Still a tincture of the old leaven was to be expected among the posterity of A. L.

Our hero was an only son of Habakkuk Liston, settled as an Anabaptist minister upon the patrimonial soil of his ancestors. A regular certificate appears, thus entered in the Church-book at Lupton Magna:—"*Johannes, filius Habakkuk et Rebeccæ Liston, Dissentientium, natus quinto Decembri,* 1780, *baptizatus sexto Februarii sequentis; Sponsoribus J. et W. Woollaston, unâ cum Maria Merryweather.*" The singularity of an Anabaptist minister conforming to the child-rites of the Church would have tempted me to doubt the authenticity of this entry, had I not been obliged with the actual sight of it by the favour of Mr. Minns, the intelligent and worthy parish clerk of Lupton. Possibly some expectation in point of worldly advantages from some of the sponsors might have induced this unseemly deviation, as it must have appeared, from the practice and principles of that generally rigid sect. The term *Dissentientium* was possibly intended by the orthodox clergyman as a slur upon the supposed inconsistency. What, or of what nature, the expectations we have hinted at may have been, we have now no means of ascertaining. Of the Woollastons no trace is now discoverable in the village. The name of Merryweather occurs over the front of a grocer's shop at the western extremity of Lupton.

Of the infant Liston we find no events recorded before his fourth year, in which a severe attack of the measles bid fair to have robbed the rising generation of a fund of innocent entertainment. He had it of the confluent kind, as it is called; and the child's life was for a week or two despaired of. His recovery he always attributes (under Heaven) to the humane interference of one Dr. Wilhelm Richter, a German empiric, who, in this extremity, prescribed a copious diet of *sauer-kraut,* which the child was observed to reach at with avidity, when other food repelled him; and from this change of diet his restoration was rapid and complete. We have often heard him name the circumstance with gratitude; and it is not altogether surprising that a relish for this kind of aliment, so abhorrent and harsh to common English palates, has accompanied him through life. When any of Mr. Liston's intimates invite him to supper, he never fails of finding, nearest to his knife and fork, a dish of *sauer-kraut.*

At the age of nine, we find our subject under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Goodenough (his father's health not permitting him probably to instruct him himself), by whom he was inducted into a competent portion of Latin and Greek, with some mathematics, till the death of Mr. Goodenough, in his own seventieth, and Master Liston's eleventh year, put a stop for the present to his classical progress.

We have heard our hero, with emotions which do his heart honour, describe the awful circumstances attending the decease of this worthy old gentleman. It seems they had been walking out together, master and pupil, in a fine sunset to the distance of three-quarters of a mile west of Lupton, when a sudden curiosity took Mr. Goodenough to look down upon a chasm, where a shaft had been lately sunk in a mining speculation (then projecting, but abandoned soon after, as not answering the promised success, by Sir Ralph Shepperton, knight, and member for the county). The old clergyman leaning over, either with incaution or sudden giddiness (probably a mixture of both), suddenly lost his footing, and, to use Mr. Liston's phrase, disappeared, and was doubtless broken into a thousand pieces. The sound of his head, &c., dashing successively upon the projecting masses of the chasm, had such an effect upon the child, that a serious sickness ensued; and, even for many years after his recovery, he was not once seen so much as to smile.

The joint death of both his parents, which happened not many months after

this disastrous accident, and were probably (one or both of them) accelerated by it, threw our youth upon the protection of his maternal great aunt, Mrs. Sittingbourn. Of this aunt we have never heard him speak but with expressions amounting almost to reverence. To the influence of her early counsels and manners he has always attributed the firmness with which, in maturer years, thrown upon a way of life commonly not the best adapted to gravity and self-retirement, he has been able to maintain a serious character, untinctured with the levities incident to his profession. Ann Sittingbourn (we have seen her portrait by Hudson) was stately, stiff, tall, with a cast of features strikingly resembling the subject of this memoir. Her estate in Kent was spacious and well wooded; the house one of those venerable old mansions which are so impressive in childhood, and so hardly forgotten in succeeding years. In the venerable solitudes of Charnwood, among thick shades of the oak and beech (this last his favourite tree), the young Liston cultivated those contemplative habits which have never entirely deserted him in after-years. Here he was commonly in the summer months to be met with, with a book in his hand,—not a play-book,—meditating. Boyle's "Reflections" was at one time the darling volume; which, in its turn, was superseded by Young's "Night Thoughts," which has continued its hold upon him through life. He carries it always about him; and it is no uncommon thing for him to be seen, in the refreshing intervals of his occupation, leaning against a side-scene, in a sort of Herbert-of-Cherbury posture, turning over a pocket-edition of his favourite author.

But the solitudes of Charnwood were not destined always to obscure the path of our young hero. The premature death of Mrs. Sittingbourn, at the age of seventy, occasioned by incautious burning of a pot of charcoal in her sleeping-chamber, left him in his nineteenth year nearly without resources. That the stage at all should have presented itself as an eligible scope for his talents, and, in particular, that he should have chosen a line so foreign to what appears to have been his turn of mind, may require some explanation.

At Charnwood, then, we behold him thoughtful, grave, ascetic. From his cradle averse to flesh-meats and strong drink; abstemious even beyond the genius of the place, and almost in spite of the remonstrances of his great-aunt, who, though strict, was not rigid,—water was his habitual drink, and his food little beyond the mast and beech-nuts of his favourite groves. It is a medical fact, that this kind of diet, however favourable to the contemplative powers of the primitive hermits, &c., is but ill-adapted to the less robust minds and bodies of a later generation. Hypochondria almost constantly ensues. It was so in the case of the young Liston. He was subject to sights, and had visions. Those arid beech-nuts, distilled by a complexion naturally adust, mounted into an occiput already prepared to kindle by long seclusion and the fervour of strict Calvinistic notions. In the glooms of Charnwood, he was assailed by illusions similar in kind to those which are related of the famous Anthony of Padua. Wild antic faces would ever and anon protrude themselves upon his sensorium. Whether he shut his eyes, or kept them open, the same illusions operated. The darker and more profound were his cogitations, the droller and more whimsical became the apparitions. They buzzed about him thick as flies, flapping at him, flouting him, hooting in his ear, yet with such comic appendages, that what at first was his bane became at length his solace; and he desired no better society than that of his merry phantasmata. We shall presently find in what way this remarkable phenomenon influenced his future destiny.

On the death of Mrs. Sittingbourn, we find him received into the family of Mr. Willoughby, an eminent Turkey merchant, resident in Birchin Lane, London. We lose a little while here the chain of his history,—by what inducements this gentleman was determined to make him an inmate of his house.

Probably he had had some personal kindness for Mrs. Sittingbourn formerly; but, however it was, the young man was here treated more like a son than a clerk, though he was nominally but the latter. Different avocations, the change of scene, with that alternation of business and recreation which in its greatest perfection is to be had only in London appear to have weaned him in a short time from the hypochondriacal affections which had beset him at Charnwood.

In the three years which followed his removal to Birchin Lane, we find him making more than one voyage to the Levant, as chief factor for Mr. Willoughby at the Porte. We could easily fill our biography with the pleasant passages which we have heard him relate as having happened to him at Constantinople; such as his having been taken up on suspicion of a design of penetrating the seraglio, &c.; but, with the deepest convincement of this gentleman's own veracity, we think that some of the stories are of that whimsical, and others of that romantic nature, which, however diverting, would be out of place in a narrative of this kind, which aims not only at strict truth, but at avoiding the very appearance of the contrary.

We will now bring him over the seas again, and suppose him in the counting-house in Birchin Lane, his protector satisfied with the returns of his factorage, and all going on so smoothly, that we may expect to find Mr. Liston at last an opulent merchant upon 'Change, as it is called. But see the turns of destiny! Upon a summer's excursion into Norfolk, in the year 1801, the accidental sight of pretty Sally Parker, as she was called (then in the Norwich company), diverted his inclinations at once from commerce; and he became, in the language of commonplace biography, stage-struck. Happy for the lovers of mirth was it that our hero took this turn; he might else have been to this hour that unentertaining character, a plodding London merchant.

We accordingly find him shortly after making his *début*, as it is called, upon the Norwich boards, in the season of that year, being then in the twenty-second year of his age. Having a natural bent to tragedy, he chose the part of Pyrrhus, in the *Distressed Mother*, to Sally Parker's Hermione. We find him afterwards as Barnwell, Altamont, Chamont, &c.; but, as if Nature had destined him to the sock, an unavoidable infirmity absolutely discapacitated him for tragedy. His person, at this latter period of which I have been speaking, was graceful, and even commanding; his countenance set to gravity: he had the power of arresting the attention of an audience at first sight almost beyond any other tragic actor. But he could not hold it. To understand this obstacle, we must go back a few years to those appalling reveries at Charnwood. Those illusions, which had vanished before the dissipation of a less recluse life and more free society, now in his solitary tragic studies, and amid the intense calls upon feeling incident to tragic acting, came back upon him with tenfold vividness. In the midst of some most pathetic passage (the parting of Jaffier with his dying friend, for instance), he would suddenly be surprised with a fit of violent horse-laughter. While the spectators were all sobbing before him with emotion, suddenly one of those grotesque faces would peep out upon him, and he could not resist the impulse. A timely excuse once or twice served his purpose; but no audiences could be expected to bear repeatedly this violation of the continuity of feeling. He describes them (the illusions) as so many demons haunting him, and paralyzing every effect. Even now, I am told, he cannot recite the famous soliloquy in *Hamlet*, even in private, without immoderate bursts of laughter. However, what he had not force of reason sufficient to overcome, he had good sense enough to turn into emolument, and determined to make a commodity of his distemper. He prudently exchanged the buskin for the sock, and the illusions instantly ceased; or, if they occurred for a short season, by their very co-operation added a zest to his comic vein,—some of his most catching faces being (as he expresses it) little more than transcripts and copies of those extraordinary phantasmata.

We have now drawn out our hero's existence to the period when he was about to meet, for the first time, the sympathies of a London audience. The particulars of his success since have been too much before our eyes to render a circumstantial detail of them expedient. I shall only mention, that Mr. Willoughby, his resentments having had time to subside, is at present one of the fastest friends of his old renegade factor; and that Mr. Liston's hopes of Miss Parker vanishing along with his unsuccessful suit to Melpomene, in the autumn of 1811 he married his present lady, by whom he has been blessed with one son, Philip, and two daughters, Ann and Augustina.

# Autobiography of Mr. Munden.

(*The London Magazine*, February, 1825.)

HARK'EE, Mr. Editor. A word in your ear. They tell me you are going to put me in print,—in print, sir; to publish my life. What is my life to you, sir? What is it to you whether I ever lived at all? My life is a very good life, sir. I am insured in the Pelican, sir. I am three-score years and six,—six, mark me, sir; but I can play Polonius, which, I believe, few of your corre—correspondents can do, sir. I suspect tricks, sir: I smell a rat; I do, I do. You would cog the die upon us; you would, you would, sir. But I will forestall you, sir. You would be deriving me from William the Conqueror, with a murrain to you. It is no such thing, sir. The town shall know better, sir. They begin to smoke your flams, sir. Mr. Liston may be born where he pleases, sir; but I will not be born at Lup—Lupton Magna for anybody's pleasure, sir. My son and I have looked over the great map of Kent together, and we can find no such place as you would palm upon us, sir; palm upon us, I say. Neither Magna nor Parva, as my son says, and he knows Latin, sir; Latin. If you write my life true, sir, you must set down, that I, Joseph Munden, comedian, came into the world upon Allhallows Day, Anno Domini, 1759—1759; no sooner nor later, sir; and I saw the first light—the first light, remember, sir, at Stoke Pogis—Stoke Pogis, *comitatu* Bucks, and not at Lup—Lup Magna, which I believe to be no better than moonshine—moonshine; do you mark me, sir? I wonder you can put such flim-flams upon us, sir; I do, I do. It does not become you, sir; I say it,—I say it. And my father was an honest tradesman, sir: he dealt in malt and hops, sir; and was a corporation-man, sir; and of the Church of England, sir, and no Presbyterian; nor Ana—Anabaptist, sir; however you may be disposed to make honest people believe to the contrary, sir. Your bams are found out, sir. The town will be your stale-puts no longer, sir; and you must not send us jolly fellows, sir,—we that are comedians, sir,—you must not send us into groves and char—charnwoods a-moping, sir. Neither charns, nor charnel-houses, sir. It is not our constitution, sir: I tell it you—I tell it you. I was a droll dog from my cradle. I came into the world tittering, and the midwife tittered, and the gossips spilt their caudle with tittering; and, when I was brought to the font, the parson could not christen me for tittering. So I was never more than half baptized. And, when I was little Joey, I made 'em all titter; there was not a melancholy

face to be seen in Pogis. Pure nature, sir. I was born a comedian. Old Screwup, the undertaker, could tell you, sir, if he were living. Why, I was obliged to be locked up every time there was to be a funeral at Pogis. I was —I was, sir? I used to *grimace* at the mutes, as he called it, and put 'em out with my mops and my mows, till they couldn't stand at a door for me. And when I was locked up, with nothing but a cat in my company, I followed my bent with trying to make her laugh; and sometimes she would, and sometimes she would not. And my schoolmaster could make nothing of me: I had only to thrust my tongue in my cheek—in my cheek, sir, and the rod dropped from his fingers; and so my education was limited, sir. And I grew up a young fellow, and it was thought convenient to enter me upon some course of life that should make me serious; but it wouldn't do, sir. And I was articled to a drysalter. My father gave forty pounds premium with me, sir. I can show the indent—dent—dentures, sir. But I was born to be a comedian, sir: so I ran away, and listed with the players, sir: and I topt my parts at Amersham and Gerrard's Cross, and played my own father to his face, in his own town of Pogis, in the part of Gripe, when I was not full seventeen years of age; and he did not know me again, but he knew me afterwards; and then he laughed, and I laughed, and, what is better, the drysalter laughed, and gave me up my articles for the joke's sake: so that I came into court afterwards with clean hands—with clean hands—do you see, sir?

[Here the manuscript becomes illegible for two or three sheets onwards, which we presume to be occasioned by the absence of Mr. Munden, jun., who clearly transcribed it for the press thus far. The rest (with the exception of the concluding paragraph, which is seemingly resumed in the first handwriting) appears to contain a confused account of some lawsuit, in which the elder Munden was engaged; with a circumstantial history of the proceedings of a case of breach of promise of marriage, made to or by (we cannot pick out which) Jemima Munden, spinster; probably the comedian's cousin, for it does not appear he had any sister; with a few dates, rather better preserved, of this great actor's engagements,—as "Cheltenham (spelt Cheltnam), 1776;" "Bath, 1779;" "London, 1789;" together with stage anecdotes of Messrs. Edwin, Wilson, Lee, Lewis, &c.; over which we have strained our eyes to no purpose, in the hope of presenting something amusing to the public. Towards the end, the manuscript brightens up a little, as we said, and concludes in the following manner:—]

——stood before them for six and thirty years [we suspect that Mr. Munden is here speaking of his final leave-taking of the stage], and to be dismissed at last. But I was heart-whole to the last, sir. What though a few drops did course themselves down the old veteran's cheeks: who could help it, sir? I was a giant that night, sir; and could have played fifty parts, each as arduous as Dozy. My faculties were never better, sir. But I was to be laid upon the shelf. It did not suit the public to laugh with their old servant any longer, sir. [Here some moisture has blotted a sentence or two.] But I can play Polonius still, sir; I can, I can. Your servant, sir, JOSEPH MUNDEN.

# Reflections in the Pillory.

(*The London Magazine*, March, 1825.)

About the year 18—, one R——d, a respectable London merchant (since dead), stood in the pillory for some alleged fraud upon the revenue. Among his papers were found the following "Reflections," which we have obtained by favour of our friend Elia, who knew him well, and had heard him describe the train of his feelings, upon that trying occasion, almost in the words of the manuscript. Elia speaks of him as a man (with the exception of the peccadillo aforesaid) of singular integrity in all his private dealings, possessing great suavity of manner, with a certain turn for humour. As our object is to present human nature under every possible circumstance, we do not think that we shall sully our pages by inserting it.—Editor.

Scene,—*Opposite the Royal Exchange.*

Time,—*Twelve to One, Noon.*

Ketch, my good fellow, you have a neat hand. Prithee adjust this new collar to my neck gingerly. I am not used to these wooden cravats. There, softly, softly. That seems the exact point between ornament and strangulation. A thought looser on this side. Now it will do. And have a care, in turning me, that I present my aspect due vertically. I now face the orient. In a quarter of an hour I shift southward,—do you mind?—and so on till I face the east again, travelling with the sun. No half-points, I beseech you,—NN. by W., or any such elaborate niceties. They become the shipman's card, but not this mystery. Now leave me a little to my own reflections.

Bless us, what a company is assembled in honour of me! How grand I stand here! I never felt so sensibly before the effect of solitude in a crowd. I muse in solemn silence upon that vast miscellaneous rabble in the pit there. From my private box I contemplate, with mingled pity and wonder, the gaping curiosity of those underlings. There are my Whitechapel supporters. Rosemary Lane has emptied herself of the very flower of her citizens to grace my show. Duke's Place sits desolate. What is there in my face, that strangers should come so far from the east to gaze upon it? [*Here an egg narrowly misses him.*] That offering was well meant, but not so cleanly executed. By the tricklings, it should not be either myrrh or frankincense. Spare your presents, my friends: I am noways mercenary. I desire no missive tokens of your approbation. I am past those valentines. Bestow these coffins of untimely chickens upon mouths that water for them. Comfort your addle spouses with them at home, and stop the mouths of your brawling brats with such Olla Podridas: they have need of them. [*A brick is let fly.*] Discase not, I pray you, nor dismantle your rent and ragged tenements, to furnish me with architectural decorations, which I can excuse. This fragment might have stopped a flaw against snow comes. [*A coal flies.*] Cinders are dear, gentlemen. This nubbling might have helped the pot boil, when your dirty cuttings from the shambles at three-halfpence a pound shall stand at a cold simmer. Now, south about, Ketch. I would enjoy Australian popularity.

What, my friends from over the water! Old benchers—files of a day—ephemeral Romans—welcome! Doth the sight of me draw souls from limbo? Can it dispeople purgatory?—Ha!

What am I, or what was my father's house, that I should thus be set up a spectacle to gentlemen and others? Why are all faces, like Persians at the sunrise, bent singly on mine alone? I was wont to be esteemed an ordinary visnomy, a quotidian merely. Doubtless these assembled myriads discern some traits of nobleness, gentility, breeding, which hitherto have escaped the common observation,—some intimations, as it were, of wisdom, valour, piety, and so forth. My sight dazzles; and, if am not deceived by the too-familiar pressure of this strange neckcloth that envelopes it, my countenance gives out lambent glories. For some painter now to take me in the lucky point of expression!—the posture so convenient!—the head never shifting, but standing quiescent in a sort of natural frame. But these artisans require a westerly aspect. Ketch, turn me.

Something of St. James's air in these my new friends. How my prospects shift and brighten! Now, if Sir Thomas Lawrence be anywhere in that group, his fortune is made for ever. I think I see some one taking out of a crayon. I will compose my whole face to a smile, which yet shall not so predominate but that gravity and gaiety shall contend, as it were,—you understand me? I will work up my thoughts to some mild rapture,—a gentle enthusiasm,—which the artist may transfer, in a manner, warm to the canvas. I will inwardly apostrophise my tabernacle.

Delectable mansion, hail! House not made of every wood! Lodging that pays no rent; airy and commodious; which, owing no window-tax, art yet all casement, out of which men have such pleasure in peering and overlooking, that they will sometimes stand an hour together to enjoy thy prospects! Cell, recluse from the vulgar! Quiet retirement from the great Babel, yet affording sufficient glimpses into it! Pulpit, that instructs without note or sermon-book; into which the preacher is inducted without tenth or first-fruit! Throne, unshared and single, that disdainest a Brentford competitor! Honour without co-rival! Or hearest thou, rather, magnificent theatre, in which the spectator comes to see and to be seen? From thy giddy heights I look down upon the common herd, who stand with eyes upturned, as if a winged messenger hovered over them; and mouths open as if they expected manna. I feel, I feel, the true episcopal yearnings. Behold in me, my flock, your true overseer! What though I cannot lay hands, because my own are laid; yet I can mutter benedictions. True *otium cum dignitate!* Proud Pisgah eminence! pinnacle sublime! O Pillory! 'tis thee I sing! Thou younger brother to the gallows, without his rough and Esau palms, that with ineffable contempt surveyest beneath thee the grovelling stocks, which claim presumptuously to be of thy great race! Let that low wood know that thou art far higher born. Let that domicile for groundling rogues and base earth-kissing varlets envy thy preferment, not seldom fated to be the wanton baiting-house, the temporary retreat, of poet and of patriot. Shades of Bastwick and of Prynne hover over thee,—Defoe is there, and more greatly daring Shebbeare,—from their (little more elevated) stations they look down with recognitions. Ketch, turn me.

I now veer to the north. Open your widest gates, thou proud Exchange of London, that I may look in as proudly! Gresham's wonder, hail! I stand upon a level with all your kings. They and I, from equal heights, with equal superciliousness, o'erlook the plodding money-hunting tribe below, who, busied in their sordid speculations, scarce elevate their eyes to notice your ancient, or my recent, grandeur. The second Charles smiles on me from three pedestals!*

* A statue of Charles II., by the elder Cibber, adorns the front of the Exchange. He stands also on high, in the train of his crowned ancestors, in his proper order, *within* that building. But the merchants of London, in a superfetation of loyalty, have, within a few years, caused to be erected another effigy of him on the ground in the centre of the interior. We do not hear that a fourth is in contemplation.

He closed the Exchequer: I cheated the Excise. Equal our darings, equal be our lot.

Are those the quarters? 'tis their fatal chime. That the ever-winged hours would but stand still! but I must descend,—descend from this dream of greatness. Stay, stay, a little while, importunate hour-hand! A moment or two, and I shall walk on foot with the undistinguished many. The clock speaks one. I return to common life. Ketch, let me out.

# The Last Peach.

(*The London Magazine*, April, 1825.)

I AM the miscrablest man living. Give me counsel, dear Editor. I was bred up in the strictest principles of honesty, and have passed my life in punctual adherence to them. Integrity might be said to be ingrained in our family. Yet I live in constant fear of one day coming to the gallows.

Till the latter end of last autumn, I never experienced these feelings of sclf-mistrust, which ever since have embittered my existence. From the apprehension of that unfortunate man,* whose story began to make so great an impression upon the public about that time, I date my horrors. I never can get it out of my head that I shall some time or other commit a forgery, or do some equally vile thing. To make matters worse, I am in a banking-house. I sit surrounded with a cluster of bank-notes. These were formerly no more to me than meat to a butcher's dog. They are now as toads and aspics. I feel all day like one situated amidst gins and pitfalls. Sovereigns, which I once took such pleasure in counting out; and scraping up with my little tin shovel (at which I was the most expert in the banking-house), now scald my hands. When I go to sign my name, I set down that of another person, or write my own in a counterfeit character. I am beset with temptations without motive. I want no more wealth than I possess. A more contented being than myself, as to money matters, exists not. What should I fear?

When a child, I was once let loose, by favour of a nobleman's gardener, into his lordship's magnificent fruit-garden, with full leave to pull the currants and the gooseberries; only I was interdicted from touching the wall-fruit. Indeed, at that season (it was the end of autumn), there was little left. Only on the south wall (can I forget the hot feel of the brick-work?) lingered the one last peach. Now, peaches are a fruit which I always had, and still have, an almost utter aversion to. There is something to my palate singularly harsh and repulsive in the flavour of them. I know not by what demon of contradiction inspired, but I was haunted by an irresistible desire to pluck it. Tear myself as often as I would from the spot, I found myself still recurring to it; till maddening with desire (desire I cannot call it), with wilfulness rather,—without appetite,—against appetite, I may call it,—in an evil hour, I reached out my hand and plucked it. Some few raindrops just then fell; the sky (from a bright day) became

* Fauntleroy.

overcast; and I was a type of our first parents, after the eating of that fatal fruit. I felt myself naked and ashamed, stripped of my virtue, spiritless. The downy fruit, whose sight rather than savour had tempted me, dropped from my hand never to be tasted. All the commentators in the world cannot persuade me but that the Hebrew word, in the second chapter of Genesis, translated "apple," should be rendered "peach." Only this way can I reconcile that mysterious story.

Just such a child at thirty am I among the cash and valuables, longing to pluck, without an idea of enjoyment further. I cannot reason myself out of these fears: I dare not laugh at them. I was tenderly and lovingly brought up. What then? Who that in life's entrance had seen the babe F——, from the lap stretching out his little fond mouth to catch the maternal kiss, could have predicted, or as much as imagined, that life's very different exit? The sight of my own fingers torments me; they seem so admirably constructed for —pilfering. Then that jugular vein which I have in common——; in an emphatic sense may I say with David, I am "fearfully made." All my mirth is poisoned by these unhappy suggestions. If, to dissipate reflection, I hum a tune, it changes to the "Lamentations of a Sinner." My very dreams are tainted. I awake with a shocking feeling of my hand in some pocket.

Advise me, dear Editor, on this painful heart-malady. Tell me, do you feel anything allied to it in yourself? Do you never feel an itching, as it were,—a *dactylomania*,—or am I alone? You have my honest confession. My next may appear from Bow Street.

# The Illustrious Defunct.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1825.)

SINCE writing this article, we have been informed that the object of our funeral oration is not definitively dead, but only moribund. So much the better: we shall have an opportunity of granting the request made to Walter by one of the children in the wood, and "kill him two times." The Abbé de Vertot having a siege to write, and not receiving the materials in time, composed the whole from his invention. Shortly after its completion, the expected documents arrived, when he threw them aside, exclaiming, "You are of no use to me now: I have carried the town."

> Nought but a blank remains, a dead void space,
> A step of life that promised such a race.—DRYDEN.

Napoleon has now sent us back from the grave sufficient echoes of his living renown: the twilight of posthumous fame has lingered long enough over the spot where the sun of his glory set; and his name must at length repose in the silence, if not in the darkness, of night. In this busy and evanescent scene, other spirits of the age are rapidly snatched away, claiming our undivided sympathies and regrets, until in turn they yield to some newer and more absorbing grief. Another name is now added to the list of mighty departed, —a name whose influence upon the hopes and fears, the fates and fortunes, of

our countrymen, has rivalled, and perhaps eclipsed, that of the defunct "child and champion of Jacobinism," while it is associated with all the sanctions of legitimate government, all the sacred authorities of social order and our most holy religion. We speak of one, indeed, under whose warrant heavy and incessant contributions were imposed upon our fellow-citizens, but who exacted nothing without the signet and the sign-manual of most devout Chancellors of the Exchequer. Not to dally longer with the sympathies of our readers, we think it right to premonish them that we are composing an epicedium upon no less distinguished a personage than the Lottery, whose last breath, after many penultimate puffs, has been sobbed forth by sorrowing contractors, as if the world itself were about to be converted into a blank. There is a fashion of eulogy, as well as of vituperation; and, though the Lottery stood for some time in the latter predicament, we hesitate not to assert that *multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.* Never have we joined in the senseless clamour which condemned the only tax whereto we became voluntary contributors,—the only resource which gave the stimulus without the danger or infatuations of gambling; the only alembic which in these plodding days sublimized our imaginations, and filled them with more delicious dreams than ever flitted athwart the sensorium of Alnaschar.

Never can the writer forget, when, as a child, he was hoisted upon a servant's shoulder in Guildhall, and looked down upon the installed and solemn pomp of the then drawing Lottery. The two awful cabinets of iron, upon whose massy and mysterious portals the royal initials were gorgeously emblazoned, as if, after having deposited the unfulfilled prophecies within, the king himself had turned the lock, and still retained the key in his pocket; the blue-coat boy, with his naked arm, first converting the invisible wheel, and then diving into the dark recess for a ticket; the grave and reverend faces of the commissioners eyeing the announced number; the scribes below calmly committing it to their huge books; the anxious countenances of the surrounding populace; while the giant figures of Gog and Magog, like presiding deities, looked down with a grim silence upon the whole proceeding,—constituted altogether a scene, which, combined with the sudden wealth supposed to be lavished from those inscrutable wheels, was well calculated to impress the imagination of a boy with reverence and amazement. Jupiter, seated between the two fatal urns of good and evil, the blind goddess with her cornucopia, the Parcæ wielding the distaff, the thread of life, and the abhorred shears, seemed but dim and shadowy abstractions of mythology, when I had gazed upon an assemblage exercising, as I dreamt, a not less eventful power, and all presented to me in palpable and living operation. Reason and experience, ever at their old spiteful work of catching and destroying the bubbles which youth delighted to follow, have indeed dissipated much of this illusion; but my mind so far retained the influence of that early impression, that I have ever since continued to deposit my humble offerings at its shrine, whenever the ministers of the Lottery went forth with type and trumpet to announce its periodical dispensations; and though nothing has been doled out to me from its undiscerning coffers but blanks, or those more vexatious tantalizers of the spirit denominated small prizes, yet do I hold myself largely indebted to this most generous diffuser of universal happiness. Ingrates that we are! are we to be thankful for no benefits that are not palpable to sense, to recognize no favours that are not of marketable value, to acknowledge no wealth unless it can be counted with the five fingers? If we admit the mind to be the sole depository of genuine joy, where is the bosom that has not been elevated into a temporary Elysium by the magic of the Lottery? Which of us has not converted his ticket, or even his sixteenth share of one into a nest-egg of Hope, upon which he has sate brooding in the secret roosting-places of his heart, and hatched it into a thousand fantastical apparitions?

What a startling revelation of the passions if all the aspirations engendered by the Lottery could be made manifest! Many an impecuniary epicure has gloated over his locked-up warrant for future wealth, as a means of realizing the dream of his namesake in the "Alchemist:"

> "My meat shall all come in in Indian shells," &c.

Many a doting lover has kissed the scrap of paper whose promissory shower of gold was to give up to him his otherwise unattainable Danaë: Nimrods have transformed the same narrow symbol into a saddle, by which they have been enabled to bestride the backs of peerless hunters; while nymphs have metamorphosed its Protean form into—

> "Rings, gauds, conceits,
> Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats,"

and all the braveries of dress, to say nothing of the obsequious husband, the two footman'd carriage, and the opera-box. By the simple charm of this numbered and printed rag, gamesters have, for a time at least, recovered their losses: spendthrifts have cleared off mortgages from their estates; the imprisoned debtor has leapt over his lofty boundary of circumscription and restraint, and revelled in all the joys of liberty and fortune; the cottage-walls have swelled out into more goodly proportion than those of Baucis and Philemon; poverty has tasted the luxuries of competence; labour has lolled at ease in a perpetual armchair of idleness; sickness has been bribed into banishment; life has been invested with new charms; and death deprived of its former terrors. Nor have the affections been less gratified than the wants, appetites, and ambitions of mankind. By the conjurations of the same potent spell, kindred have lavished anticipated benefits upon one another, and charity upon all. Let it be termed a delusion,—a fool's paradise is better than the wise man's Tartarus; be it branded as an ignis-fatuus,—it was at least a benevolent one, which, instead of beguiling its followers into swamps, caverns, and pitfalls, allured them on with all the blandishments of enchantment to a garden of Eden,—an ever-blooming Elysium of delight. True, the pleasures it bestowed were evanescent: but which of our joys are permanent? and who so inexperienced as not to know that anticipation is always of higher relish than reality, which strikes a balance both in our sufferings and enjoyments? "The fear of ill exceeds the ill we fear;" and fruition, in the same proportion, invariably falls short of hope. "Men are but children of a larger growth," who may amuse themselves for a long time in gazing at the reflection of the moon in the water; but, if they jump in to grasp it, they may grope for ever, and only get the farther from their object. He is the wisest who keeps feeding upon the future, and refrains as long as possible from undeceiving himself by converting his pleasant speculations into disagreeable certainties.

The true mental epicure always purchased his ticket early, and postponed inquiry into its fate to the last possible moment, during the whole of which intervening period he had an imaginary twenty thousand locked up in his desk: and was not this well worth all the money? Who would scruple to give twenty pounds interest for even the ideal enjoyment of as many thousands during two or three months? *Crede quod habes, et habes;* and the usufruct of such a capital is surely not dear at such a price. Some years ago, a gentleman in passing along Cheapside saw the figures 1069, of which number he was the sole proprietor, flaming on the window of a lottery-office as a capital prize. Somewhat flurried by this discovery, not less welcome than unexpected, he resolved to walk round St. Paul's that he might consider in what way to communicate the happy tidings to his wife and family; but, upon re-passing the shop

he observed that the number was altered to 10,069, and, upon inquiry, had the mortification to learn that his ticket was a blank, and had only been stuck up in the window by a mistake of the clerk. This effectually calmed his agitation; but he always speaks of himself as having once possessed twenty thousand pounds, and maintains that his ten-minutes' walk round St. Paul's was worth ten times the purchase-money of the ticket. A prize thus obtained has, moreover, this special advantage,—it is beyond the reach of fate; it cannot be squandered; bankruptcy cannot lay siege to it; friends cannot pull it down, nor enemies blow it up; it bears a charmed life, and none of woman born can break its integrity, even by the dissipation of a single fraction. Show me the property in these perilous times, that is equally campact and impregnable. We can no longer become enriched for a quarter of an hour; we can no longer succeed in such splendid failures; all our chances of making such a miss have vanished with the last of the Lotteries.

Life will now become a flat, prosaic routine of matter-of-fact; and sleep itself erst so prolific of numerical configurations and mysterious stimulants to lottery adventure, will be disfurnished of its figures and figments. People will cease to harp upon the one lucky number suggested in a dream, and which forms the exception, while they are scrupulously silent upon the ten thousand falsified dreams which constitute the rule. Morpheus will stifle Cocker with a handful of poppies, and our pillows will be no longer haunted by the book of numbers.

And who, too, shall maintain the art and mystery of puffing, in all its pristine glory, when the lottery professors shall have abandoned its cultivation? They were the first, as they will assuredly be the last, who fully developed the resources of that ingenious art; who cajoled and decoyed the most suspicious and wary reader into a perusal of their advertisements by devices of endless variety and cunning; who baited their lurking schemes with midnight murders, ghost-stories, crim-cons, bon-mots, balloons, dreadful catastrophies, and every diversity of joy and sorrow, to catch newspaper-gudgeons. Ought not such talents to be encouraged? Verily the abolitionists have much to answer for!

And now, having established the felicity of all those who gained imaginary prizes, let us proceed to show that the equally numerous class who were presented with real blanks have not less reason to consider themselves happy. Most of us have cause to be thankful for that which is bestowed! but we have all, probably. reason to be still more grateful for that which is withheld, and more especially for our being denied the sudden possession of riches. In the Litany, indeed, we call upon the Lord to deliver us "in all time of our wealth;" but how few of us are sincere in deprecating such a calamity! Massinger's Luke, and Ben Jonson's Sir Epicure Mammon, and Pope's Sir Balaam, and our own daily observation, might convince us that the Devil "now tempts by making rich, not making poor." We may read in the *Guardian* a circumstantial account of a man who was utterly ruined by gaining a capital prize; we may recollect what Dr. Johnson said to Garrick, when the latter was making a display of his wealth at Hampton Court—"Ah, David, David! these are the things that make a death-bed terrible;" we may recall the Scripture declaration, as to the difficulty a rich man finds in entering the kingdom of Heaven; and, combining all these denunciations against opulence, let us heartily congratulate one another upon our lucky escape from the calamity of a twenty or thirty thousand pound prize! The fox in the fable, who accused the unattainable grapes of sourness, was more of a philosopher than we are generally willing to allow. He was an adept in that species of moral alchemy which turns everything to gold, and converts disappointment itself into a ground of resignation and content. Such we have shown to be the great lesson inculcated by the Lottery, when rightly contemplated; and, if we might parody M. de

Châteaubriand's jingling expression,—"*Le Roi est mort: vive le Roi!*"—we should be tempted to exclaim, "The Lottery is no more: long live the Lottery!"

# The Religion of Actors.

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, April, 1826.)

[The "present licenser," referred to in the fifteenth line below, was George Colman the younger.]

THE world has hitherto so little troubled its head upon the points of doctrine held by a community which contributes in other ways so largely to its amusement, that, before the late mischance of a celebrated tragic actor, it scarce condescended to look into the practice of any individual player, much less to inquire into the hidden and abscondite springs of his actions. Indeed, it is with some violence to the imagination that we conceive of an actor as belonging to the relations of private life, so closely do we identify these persons in our mind with the characters which they assume upon the stage. How oddly does it sound, when we are told that the late Miss Pope, for instance,—that is to say, in our notion of her *Mrs. Candour*,—was a good daughter, an affectionate sister, and exemplary in all the parts of domestic life! With still greater difficulty can we carry our notions to church, and conceive of Liston kneeling upon a hassock, or Munden uttering a pious ejaculation,—"making mouths at the invisible event." But the times are fast improving; and, if the process of sanctity begun under the happy auspices of the present licencer go on to its completion, it will be as necessary for a comedian to give an account of his faith as of his conduct. Fawcett must study the five points; and Dicky Suett, if he were alive, would have to rub up his catechism. Already the effects of it begin to appear. A celebrated performer has thought fit to oblige the world with a confession of his faith,—or Br——'s *Religio Dramatici.* This gentleman, in his laudable attempt to shift from his person the obloquy of Judaism, with a forwardness of a new convert, in trying to prove too much, has, in the opinion of many, proved too little. A simple declaration of his Christianity was sufficient; but, strange to say, his apology has not a word about it. We are left to gather it from some expressions which imply that he is a Protestant; but we did not wish to inquire into the niceties of his orthodoxy. To his friends of the *old persuasion* the distinction was impertinent; for what cares Rabbi Ben Kimchi for the differences which have split our novelty? To the great body of Christians that holds the Pope's supremacy—that is to say, to the major part of the Christian world—his religion will appear as much to seek as ever. But perhaps he conceived that all Christians are Protestants, as children and the common people call all, that are not animals, Christians. The mistake was not very considerable in so young a proselyte, or he might think the general (as logicians speak) involved in the particular. All Protestants are Christians; but I am a Protestant; *ergo*, &c.: as if a marmoset, contending to be a man, overleaping that term as too generic and vulgar, should at once

roundly proclaim himself to be a gentleman. The argument would be, as we say *exabundanti.* From whichever cause this *excessus in terminis* proceeded, we can do no less than congratulate the general state of Christendom upon the accession of so extraordinary a convert. Who was the happy instrument of the conversion, we are yet to learn: it comes nearest to the attempt of the late pious Dr. Watts to Christianize the Psalms of the Old Testament. Something of the old Hebrew raciness is lost in the transfusion; but much of its asperity is softened and pared down in the adaptation.

The appearance of so singular a treatise at this conjuncture has set us upon an inquiry into the present state of religion upon the stage generally. By the favour of the Churchwardens of St. Martin's in the Fields, and St. Paul's, Covent Garden, who have very readily, and with great kindness, assisted our pursuit, we are enabled to lay before the public the following particulars. Strictly speaking, neither of the two great bodies is collectively a religious institution. We expected to find a chaplain among them, as at St. Stephen's and other Court establishments; and were the more surprised at the omission, as the last Mr. Bengough at the one house, and Mr. Powell at the other, from a gravity of speech and demeanour, and the habit of wearing black at their first appearances in the beginning of the *fifth* or the conclusion of the *fourth* act, so eminently pointed out their qualifications for such office. These corporations, then, being not properly congregational, we must seek the solution of our question in the tastes, attainments, accidental breeding, and education of the individual members of them. As we were prepared to expect, a majority at both houses adhere to the religion of the Church Established,—only that at one of them a strong leaven of Roman Catholicism is suspected; which, considering the notorious education of the manager at a foreign seminary, is not so much to be wondered at. Some have gone so far as to report that Mr. T—— y, in particular, belongs to an order lately restored on the Continent. We can contradict this: that gentleman is a member of the Kirk of Scotland: and his name is to be found, much to his honour, in the list of seceders from the congregation of Mr. Fletcher. While the generality, as we have said, are content to jog on in the safe trammels of national orthodoxy, symptoms of a sectarian spirit have broken out in quarters where we should least have looked for it. Some of the ladies at both houses are deep in controverted points. Miss F——e, we are credibly informed, is a *Sub-* and Madame V—— a *Supra*-Lapsarian. Mr. Pope is the last of the exploded sect of the Ranters. Mr. Sinclair has joined the Shakers. Mr. Grimaldi, sen., after being long a Jumper, has lately fallen into some whimsical theories respecting the fall of man; which he understands, not of an allegorical, but a *real tumble,* by which the whole body of humanity became, as it were, lame to the performance of good works. Pride he will have to be nothing but a stiff neck; irresolution, the nerves shaken; an inclination to sinister paths, crookedness of the joints; spiritual deadness, a paralysis; want of charity, a contraction in the fingers; despising of government, a broken head; the plaster, a sermon; the lint to bind it up, the text; the probers, the preachers; a pair of crutches, the old and new law; a bandage, religious obligation: a fanciful mode of illustration, derived from the accidents and habits of his past calling *spiritualized,* rather than from any accurate acquaintance with the Hebrew text, in which report speaks him but a raw scholar. Mr. Elliston, from all we can learn, has his religion yet to choose; though some think him a Muggletonian.

# The Months.

(*Hone's Every Day Book*, 16th April, 1827.)

RUMMAGING over the contents of an old stall at a half *book*, half *old-iron shop*, in an alley leading from Wardour Street to Soho Square, yesterday, I lit upon a ragged duodecimo which had been the strange delight of my infancy, and which I had lost sight of for more than forty years,—the "Queen-like Closet, or Rich Cabinet;" written by Hannah Woolly, and printed for R. C. and T. S., 1681; being an abstract of receipts in cookery, confectionery, cosmetics, needlework, morality, and all such branches of what were then considered as female accomplishments. The price demanded was sixpence, which the owner (a little squab duodecimo character himself) enforced with the assurance that his "own mother should not have it for a farthing less." On my demurring at this extraordinary assertion, the dirty little vendor reinforced his assertion with a sort of oath, which seemed more than the occasion demanded: "And now," said he, "I have put my soul to it." Pressed by so solemn an asseveration, I could no longer resist a demand which seemed to set me, however unworthy, upon a level with its dearest relations; and depositing a tester, I bore away the tattered prize in triumph. I remember a gorgeous description of the twelve months of the year, which I thought would be a fine substitute for those poetical descriptions of them which your "Every Day Book" had nearly exhausted out of Spenser. "This will be a treat," thought I, "for friend Hone." To memory they seemed no less fantastic and splendid than the other. But what are the mistakes of childhood! On reviewing them, they turned out to be only a set of commonplace receipts for working the seasons, months, heathen gods and goddesses, &c., in *samplers!* Yet, as an instance of the homely occupation of our great grandmothers, they may be amusing to some readers. "I have seen," says the notable Hannah Woolly, "such ridiculous things done in work, as it is an abomination to any artist to behold. As for example: You may find, in some pieces, *Abraham* and *Sarah*, and many other persons of old time, clothed as they go nowadays, and truly sometimes worse; for they most resemble the pictures on ballads. Let all ingenious women have regard, that when they work any image, to represent it aright. First, let it be drawn well, and then observe the directions which are given by knowing men. I do assure you, I never durst work any Scripture story without informing myself from the ground of it; nor any other story, or single person without informing myself both of the visage and habit; as followeth:—

"If your work *Jupiter, the imperial feigned God*, he must have long, black curled hair, a purple garment trimmed with gold, and sitting upon a golden throne, with bright yellow clouds about him."

THE TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR.

*March.* Is drawn in tawny, with a fierce aspect: a helmet upon his head, and leaning on a spade; and a basket of garden-seeds in his left hand, and in his right hand the sign of *Aries;* and winged.

*April.* A young man in green, with a garland of myrtle and hawthorn-buds; winged; in one hand primroses and violets, in the other the sign *Taurus.*

*May.* With a sweet and lovely countenance: clad in a robe of white and green, embroidered with several flowers; upon his head a garden of all manner of roses; on the one hand a nightingale, in the other a lute. His sign must be *Gemini.*

*June.* In a mantle of dark grass-green; upon his head a garland of bents, kings-cups, and maiden-hair; in his left hand an angle, with a box of cantharides; in his right, the sign *Cancer;* and upon his arms a basket of seasonable fruits.

*July.* In a jacket of light yellow, eating cherries; with his face and bosom sun-burnt! upon his head a wreath of centaury and wild thyme; a scythe on his shoulder, and a bottle at his girdle; carrying the sign *Leo.*

*August.* A young man of fierce and choleric aspect, in a flame-coloured garment; upon his head a garland of wheat and rye; upon his arm a basket of all manner of ripe fruits; at his belt a sickle; his sign *Virgo.*

*September.* A merry and cheerful countenance, in a purple robe; upon his head a wreath of red and white grapes; in his left hand a handful of oats; withal carrying a horn of plenty, full of all manner of ripe fruits; in his right hand the sign *Libra.*

*October.* In a garment of yellow and carnation; upon his head a garland of oak-leaves with acorns; in his right hand the sign *Scorpio;* in his left hand a basket of medlars, services, and chestnuts, and any other fruits then in season.

*November.* In a garment of changeable green and black; upon his head a garland of olives, with the fruit in his left hand; bunches of parsnips and turnips in his right: his sign *Sagittarius.*

*December.* A horrid and fearful aspect, clad in Irish rags, or coarse frieze girt unto him; upon his head three or four night-caps, and over them a Turkish turban; his nose red, his mouth and beard clogged with icicles; at his back a bundle of holly, ivy, or mistletoe; holding in furred mittens the sign of *Capricornus.*

*January.* Clad all in white, as the earth looks with the snow, blowing his nails; in his left arm a billet; the sign *Aquarius* standing by his side.

*February.* Clothed in a dark sky-colour, carrying in his right hand the sign *Pisces.*

The following receipt "To dress up a chimney very fine for the summer-time, as I have done many, and they have been liked very well," may not be unprofitable to the housewives of this century. [After giving the extract, Lamb adds]:

One phrase in the above should particularly recommend it to such of your female readers as, in the nice language of the day, have done growing some time,—"little toad-stools, &c., and anything that is *old and pretty.*" Was ever antiquity so smoothed over? The culinary receipts have nothing remarkable in them, except the costliness of them. Everything (to the meanest meats) is sopped in claret, steeped in claret, basted with claret, as if claret were as cheap as ditch-water. I remember Bacon recommends opening a turf or two in your garden walks, and pouring into each a bottle of claret, to recreate the sense of smelling, being no less grateful than beneficial. We hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will attend to this in his next reduction of French wines, that we may once more water our gardens with right Bourdeaux. The medical recipes are as whimsical as they are cruel. Our ancestors were not at all effeminate on his head. Modern sentimentalists would shrink at a cock plucked and bruised in a mortar alive to make a cullis, or a live mole baked in an oven (*be sure it be alive*) to make a powder for consumption. But the whimsicalest of all are the directions to servants (for this little book is a compendium of all duties): the footman is seriously admonished not to stand lolling against his master's chair while he waits at table; for "to lean on a

chair when they wait is a particular favour shown to any superior servant, as the chief gentleman, or the waiting-woman when she rises from the table. Also he must not "hold the plates before his mouth to be defiled with his breath, nor touch them on the right [inner] side." Surely Swift must have seen this little treatise.

# Reminiscences of Sir Jeffery Dunstan

(*Hone's Every Day Book*, 22nd June, 1827.)

[A footnote signed "Ed. of Hone's Every Day Book," explained, at the mention of Sir Jeffery's appearance upon the stage somewhere in the character of Doctor Last, that "It was at the Haymarket Theatre."]

To your account of Sir Jeffery Dunstan, in columns 829-30 (where, by an unfortunate erratum, the effigies of *two Sir Jefferys* appear, when the uppermost figure is clearly meant for Sir Harry Dimsdale), you may add that the writer of this has frequently met him in his latter days, about 1790 or 1791, returning in an evening, after his long day's itineracy, to his domicile,—a wretched shed in the most beggarly purlieu of Bethnal Green, a little on this side the Mile-end Turnpike. The lower figure in that leaf most correctly describes his then appearance, except that no graphic art can convey an idea of the general squalor of it, and of his bag (his constant concomitant) in particular. Whether it contained "old wigs" at that time, I know not; but it seemed a fitter repository for bones snatched out of kennels than for any part of a gentleman's dress, even at second-hand.

The ex-member for Garrat was a melancholy instance of a great man whose popularity is worn out. He still carried his sack; but it seemed a part of his identity rather than an implement of his profession; a badge of past grandeur: could anything have divested him of *that*, he would have shown a "poor forked animal" indeed. My life upon it, it contained no curls at the time I speak of. The most decayed and spiritless remnants of what was once a peruke would have scorned the filthy case; would absolutely have "burst its cerements." No: it was empty, or brought home bones, or a few cinders, possibly. A strong odour of burnt bones, I remember, blended with the scent of horse-flesh seething into dog's meat, and only relieved a little by the breathings of a few brick-kilns, made up the atmosphere of the delicate suburban spot which this great man had chosen for the last scene of his earthly vanities. The cry of "old wigs" had ceased with the possession of any such fripperies: his sack might have contained not unaptly a little mould to scatter upon that grave to which he was now advancing; but it told of vacancy and desolation. His quips were silent too, and his brain was empty as his sack: he slank along, and seemed to decline popular observation. If a few boys followed him, it seemed rather from habit than any expectation of fun.

> Alas! how changed from *him*,
> The life of humour, and the soul of whim,
> Gallant and gay on Garrat's hustings proud!

But it is thus that the world rewards its favourites in decay. What faults he had, I know not. I have heard something of a peccadillo or so. But some little deviation from the precise line of rectitude might have been winked at in

so tortuous and stigmatic a frame. Poor Sir Jeffery! it were well if some M.P.'s in earnest had passed their parliamentary existence with no more offences against integrity than could be laid to thy charge! A fair dismissal was thy due, not so unkind a degradation; some little snug retreat, with a bit of green before thine eyes, and not a burial alive in the fetid beggaries of Bethnal. Thou wouldst have ended thy days in a manner more appropriate to thy pristine dignity, installed in munificent mockery (as in mock honours you had lived),—a poor knight of Windsor!

Every distinct place of public speaking demands an oratory peculiar to itself. The forensic fails within the walls of St. Stephen. Sir Jeffery was a living instance of this; for, in the flower of his popularity, an attempt was made to bring him out upon the stage (at which of the winter theatres I forget, but I well remember the anecdote) in the part of *Doctor Last*. The announcement drew a crowded house; but, notwithstanding infinite tutoring,—by Foote or Garrick, I forget which,—when the curtain drew up, the heart of Sir Jeffery failed, and he faltered on, and made nothing of his part, till the hisses of the house at last, in very kindness, dismissed him from the boards. Great as his parliamentary eloquence had shown itself, brilliantly as his off-hand sallies had sparkled on a hustings, they here totally failed him. Perhaps he had an aversion to borrowed wit, and, like my Lord Foppington, disdained to entertain himself (or others) with the forced products of another man's brain. Your man of quality is more diverted with the natural sprouts of his own.

# Captain Starkey.

(*Hone's Every Day Book*, 21st July, 1826.)

DEAR SIR,—I read your account of this unfortunate being, and his forlorn piece of self-history, with that smile of half-interest which the annals of insignificance excite, till I came to where he says, "I was bound apprentice to Mr. William Bird, an eminent writer, and teacher of languages and mathematics," &c.; when I started as one does in the recognition of an old acquaintance in a supposed stranger. This, then, was that Starkey of whom I have heard my sister relate so many pleasing anecdotes; and whom, never having seen, I yet seem almost to remember. For nearly fifty years, she had lost all sight of him; and, behold! the gentle usher of her youth, grown into an aged beggar, dubbed with an opprobrious title to which he had no pretensions; an object and a May-game! To what base purposes may we not return! What may not have been the meek creature's sufferings, what his wanderings, before he finally settled down in the comparative comfort of an old hospitaller of the almonry of Newcastle? And is poor Starkey dead?

I was a scholar of that "eminent writer" that he speaks of; but Starkey had quitted the school about a year before I came to it. Still the odour of his merits had left a fragrancy upon the recollection of the elder pupils. The schoolroom stands where it did, looking into a discoloured, dingy garden in the passage leading from Fetter Lane into Bartlett's Buildings. It is still a school, though the main prop, alas! has fallen so ingloriously; and bears a Latin inscription over the entrance in the lane, which was unknown in our humbler

times. Heaven knows what "languages" were taught in it then! I am sure that neither my sister nor myself brought any out of it but a little of our native English. By "mathematics," reader, must be understood "ciphering." It was, in fact, a humble day-school, at which reading and writing were taught to us boys in the morning; and the same slender erudition was communicated to the girls, our sisters, &c., in the evening. Now, Starkey presided, under Bird, over both establishments. In my time, Mr. Cook, now or lately a respectable singer and performer at Drury Lane Theatre, and nephew to Mr. Bird, had succeeded to him. I well remember Bird. He was a squat, corpulent, middle-sized man, with something of the gentleman about him, and that peculiar mild tone—especially while he was inflicting punishment—which is so much more terrible to children than the angriest looks and gestures. Whippings were not frequent; but, when they took place, the correction was performed in a private room adjoining, where we could only hear the plaints, but saw nothing. This heightened the decorum and the solemnity. But the ordinary chastisement was the bastinado, a stroke or two on the palm with that almost obsolete weapon now,—the ferule. A ferule was a sort of flat ruler, widened, at the inflicting end, into a shape resembling a pear,—but nothing like so sweet, with a delectable hole in the middle to raise blisters, like a cupping-glass. I have an intense recollection of that disused instrument of torture, and the malignancy, in proportion to the apparent mildness, with which its strokes were applied. The idea of a rod is accompanied with something ludicrous; but by no process can I look back upon this blister-raiser with anything but unmingled horror. To make him look more formidable,—if a pedagogue had need of these heightenings,—[1]Bird wore one of those flowered Indian gowns formerly in use with schoolmasters, the strange figures upon which we used to interpret into hieroglyphics of pain and suffering. But, boyish fears apart, Bird, I believe, was, in the main, a humane and judicious master.

Oh, how I remember our legs wedged into those uncomfortable sloping desks, where we sat elbowing each other; and the injunctions to attain a free hand, unattainable in that position; the first copy I wrote after, with its moral lesson, "Art improves Nature;" the still earlier pot-hooks and the hangers, some traces of which I fear may yet be apparent in this manuscript; the truant looks side-long to the garden, which seemed a mockery of our imprisonment; the prize for best spelling which had almost turned my head, and which, to this day, I cannot reflect upon without a vanity, which I ought to be ashamed of; our little leaden inkstands, not separately subsisting, but sunk into the desks; the bright, punctually-washed morning fingers, darkening gradually with another and another ink-spot! What a world of little associated circumstances, pains, and pleasures, mingling their quotas of pleasure, arise at the reading of those few simple words,—"Mr. William Bird, an eminent writer, and teacher of languages and mathematics, in Fetter Lane, Holborn!"

Poor Starkey, when young, had that peculiar stamp of old-fashionedness in his face which makes it impossible for a beholder to predicate any particular age in the object. You can scarce make a guess between seventeen and seven and thirty. This antique cast always seems to promise ill-luck and penury. Yet it seems he was not always the abject thing he came to. My sister, who well remembers him, can hardly forgive Mr. Thomas Ranson for making an etching so unlike her idea of him when he was a youthful teacher at Mr. Bird's school. Old age and poverty—a life-long poverty, she thinks—could at no time have so effaced the marks of native gentility which were once so visible in a face otherwise strikingly ugly, thin, and care-worn. From her recollections of him, she thinks that he would have wanted bread before he would have begged or borrowed a halfpenny. "If any of the girls," she says, "who were my school-fellows, should be reading, through their aged spectacles, tidings, from the dead, of their youthful friend Starkey, they will feel a pang, as I do,

at having teased his gentle spirit." They were big girls, it seems—too old to attend his instructions with the silence necessary; and, however old age and a long state of beggary seems to have reduced his writing faculties to a state of imbecility, in those days his language occasionally rose to the bold and figurative; for, when he was in despair to stop their chattering, his ordinary phrase was, "Ladies, if you will not hold your peace, not all the powers in heaven can make you." Once he was missing for a day or two: he had run away. A little, old, unhappy-looking man brought him back,—it was his father,—and he did no business in the school that day, but sat moping in a corner, with his hands before his face; and the girls, his tormentors, in pity for his case, for the rest of that day forbore to annoy him. "I had been there but a few months," adds she, "when Starkey, who was the chief instructor of us girls, communicated to us a profound secret,—that the tragedy of *Cato* was shortly to be acted by the elder boys, and that we were to be invited to the representation." That Starkey lent a helping hand in fashioning the actors, she remembers; and, but for his unfortunate person, he might have had some distinguished part in the scene to enact. As it was, he had the arduous task of prompter assigned to him, and his feeble voice was heard clear and distinct, repeating the text during the whole performance. She describes her recollection of the cast of characters, even now, with a relish. Martia, by the handsome Edgar Hickman, who afterwards went to Africa, and of whom she never afterwards heard tidings; Lucia, by Master Walker, whose sister was her particular friend: Cato, by John Hunter, a masterly declaimer, but a plain boy, and shorter by the head than his two sons in the scene, &c. In conclusion, Starkey appears to have been one of those mild spirits, which, not originally deficient in understanding, are crushed by penury into dejection and feebleness. He might have proved a useful adjunct, if not an ornament, to society, if Fortune had taken him into a very little fostering; but, wanting that, he became a captain,—a byword,—and lived and died a broken bulrush.

# The Ass.

(*Hone's Every Day Book*, 5th October, 1826.)

[Prefixed to this communication, on column 1,358 of the first volume of "Hone's Every Day Book," appeared the following editorial paragraph:—"The cantering of Tim Tims startles him who told of his youthful days at the school wherein poor 'Starkey' cyphered part of his little life. C. L., getting well, but weak from painful and severe indisposition, is off and away for a short discursion. Better health to him, and good be to him all his life. Here he is." Whereupon follows incongruously THE ASS—as the title of the article.]

MR. COLLIER, in his "Poetical Decameron" (Third Conversation), notices a tract printed in 1595, with the author's initials only, A. B., entitled "The Noblenesse of the Asse; a work rare, learned, and excellent." He has selected the following pretty passage from it: "He (the ass) refuseth no burden: he goes whither he is sent, without any contradiction. He lifts not his foote against any one; he bytes not; he is no fugitive, nor malicious affected. He doth all things in good sort, and to his liking that hath cause to employ

him. If strokes be given him, he cares not for them ; and, as our modern poet singeth,—

> "'Thou wouldst (perhaps) he should become thy foe,
> And to that end dost beat him many times :
> He cares not for himselfe, much less thy blow.'"

Certainly Nature, foreseeing the cruel usage which this useful servant to man should receive at man's hand, did prudently in furnishing him with a tegument impervious to ordinary stripes. The malice of a child or a weak hand can make feeble impressions on him. His back offers no mark to a puny foeman. To a common whip or switch his hide presents an absolute insensibility. You might as well pretend to scourge a schoolboy with a tough pair of leather breeches on. His jerkin is well fortified; and therefore the costermongers, "between the years 1790 and 1800," did more politicly than piously in lifting up a part of his upper garment. I well remember that beastly and bloody custom. I have often longed to see one of those refiners in discipline himself at the cart's tail, with just such a convenient spot laid bare to the tender mercies of the whipster. But, since Nature has resumed her rights, it is to be hoped that this patient creature does not suffer to extremities; and that, to the savages who still belabour his poor carcass with their blows (considering the sort of anvil they are laid upon), he might in some sort, if he could speak, exclaim with the philosopher, "Lay on : you beat but upon the case of Anaxarchus."

Contemplating this natural safeguard, this fortified exterior, it is with pain I view the sleek, foppish, combed, and curried person of this animal as he is disnaturalized at watering-places, &c., where they affect to make a palfrey of him. Fie on all such sophistications ! It will never do, master groom. Something of his honest, shaggy exterior will still peep up in spite of you,—his good, rough, native, pine-apple coating. You cannot "refine a scorpion into a fish, though you rinse it and scour it with ever so cleanly cookery."*

The modern poet quoted by A.B. proceeds to celebrate a virtue for which no one to this day had been aware that the ass was remarkable :—

> "One other gift this beast hath as his owne,
> Wherewith the rest could not be furnishèd ;
> On man himself the same was not bestowne :
> To wit, on him is ne'er engenderèd
> The hateful vermine that doth teare the skin,
> And to the bode [body] doth make his passage in."

And truly, when one thinks on the suit of impenetrable armour with which Nature (like Vulcan to another Achilles) has provided him, these subtile enemies to *our* repose would have shown some dexterity in getting into *his* quarters. As the bogs of Ireland by tradition expel toads and reptiles, he may well defy these small deer in his fastnesses. It seems the latter had not arrived at the exquisite policy adopted by the human vermin "between 1790 and 1800."

But the most singular and delightful gift of the ass, according to the writer of this pamphlet, is his *voice*, the "goodly, sweet, and continual brayings" of which, "whereof they forme a melodious and proportionable kinde of musicke," seem to have affected him with no ordinary pleasure. "Nor thinke I," he adds, "that any of our immoderate musicians can deny but that their song is full of exceeding pleasure to be heard ; because therein is to be discerned both concord, discord, singing in the meane, the beginning to sing in large compasse, then following into rise and fall, the halfe-note, whole note, musicke of five

* Milton from memory.

voices, firme singing by four voices, three together, or one voice and a halfe. Then their variable contrarities amongst them, when one delivers forth a long tenor or a short, the pausing for time, breathing in measure, breaking the minim or very least moment of time. Last of all, to heare the musicke of five or six voices chaunged to so many of asses is amongst them to heare a song of world without end."

There is no accounting for ears, or for that laudable enthusiasm with which an author is tempted to invest a favourite subject with the most incompatible perfections: I should otherwise, for my own taste, have been inclined rather to have given a place to these extraordinary musicians at that banquet of nothing-less-than-sweet-sounds, imagined by old Jeremy Collier (Essays, 1698, part ii. on Music), where, after describing the inspiriting effects of martial music in a battle, he hazards an ingenious conjecture, whether a sort of *anti-music* might not be invented, which should have quite the contrary effect of "sinking the spirits, shaking the nerves, curdling the blood, and inspiring despair and cowardice and consternation. 'Tis probable," he says, "the roaring of lions, the warbling of cats and screech-owls, together with a mixture of the howling of dogs, judiciously imitated and compounded, might go a great way in this invention." The dose, we confess, is pretty potent, and skilfully enough prepared. But what shall we say to the Ass of Silenus, who, if we may trust to classic lore, by his own proper sounds, without thanks to cat or screech-owl, dismayed and put to rout a whole army of giants? Here was *anti-music* with a vengeance; a whole *Pan-Dis-Harmonicon* in a single lungs of leather!

But I keep you trifling too long on this asinine subject. I have already passed the *Pons Asinorum*, and will desist, remembering the old pedantic pun of Jem Boyer, my schoolmaster,—

"Ass *in præsenti* seldom makes a WISE MAN *in futuro*."

# In Re Squirrels.

(*Hone's Every Day Book*, 17th October, 1826.)

FLETCHER in the "Faithful Shepherdess." The satyr offers to Clorin—

> "Grapes whose lusty blood
> Is the learned poet's good,—
> Sweeter yet did never crown
> The head of Bacchus; nuts more brown
> Than the squirrels' teeth that crack them."

What is gone with the cages with the climbing squirrel, and bells to them, which were formerly the indispensable appendage to the outside of a tinman's shop, and were, in fact, the only live signs? One, we believe, still hangs out on Holborn; but they are fast vanishing with the good old modes of our ancestors. They seem to have been superseded by that still more ingenious refinement of modern humanity,—the tread-mill; in which *human* squirrels still perform a similar round of ceaseless, unprogressive clambering, which must be nuts to them.

We almost doubt the fact of the teeth of this creature being so purely orange-

coloured as Mr. Urban's correspondent gives out. One of our old poets—and they were pretty sharp observers of Nature—describes them as brown. But perhaps the naturalist referred to meant "of the colour of a Maltese orange," which is rather more obfuscated than your fruit of Seville or St. Michael's, and may help to reconcile the difference. We cannot speak from observation; but we remember at school getting our fingers into the orangery of one of these little gentry (not having a due caution of the traps set there), and the result proved sourer than lemons. The author of the "Task," somewhere speaks of their anger as being "insignificantly fierce;" but we found the demonstration of it on this occasion quite as significant as we desired, and have not been disposed since to look any of these "gift horses" in the mouth. Maiden aunts keep these "small deer," as they do parrots, to bite people's fingers, on purpose to give them good advice "not to adventure so near the cage another time." As for their "six quavers divided into three quavers and a dotted crotchet," I suppose they may go into Jeremy Bentham's next budget of fallacies, along with the "melodious and proportionable kinde of musicke" recorded, in your last number, of a highly-gifted animal.

## Estimate of Defoe's Secondary Novels.

(*Memoirs of Defoe*, by Walter Wilson, vol. iii., 1830.)

[First identified by Mr. Herne Shepherd.]

In the appearances of truth, in all the incidents and conversations that occur in them, they exceed any works of fiction that I am acquainted with. It is perfect illusion. The author never appears in these self-narratives (for so they ought to be called, or rather auto-biographies), but the narrator chains us down to an implicit belief in everything he says. There is all the minute detail of a log-book in it. Dates are painfully pressed upon the memory. Facts are repeated over and over in varying phrases, till you cannot choose but believe them. It is like reading evidence in a court of justice. So anxious the story-teller seems that the truth should be clearly comprehended, that when he has told us a matter of fact, or a motive, in a line or two farther down he repeats it, with his favourite figure of speech, *I say*, so and so, though he had made it abundantly plain before. This is in imitation of the common people's way of speaking, or rather of the way in which they are addressed by a master or mistress, who wishes to impress something upon their memories, and has a wonderful effect upon matter-of-fact readers. Indeed it is to such principally that he writes. His style is everywhere beautiful, but plain and homely. "Robinson Crusoe" is delightful to all ranks and classes; but it is easy to see, that it is written in a phraseology peculiarly adapted to the lower conditions of readers. Hence it is an especial favourite with seafaring men, poor boys, servant-maids, &c. His novels are capital kitchen-reading, while they are worthy, from their interest, to find a shelf in the libraries of the wealthiest and the most learned. His passion for matter-of-fact narrative, sometimes betrayed him into a long relation of common incidents, which might happen to any man, and have no interest beyond the intense appearance of truth in them, to recommend them. The whole latter half, or two-thirds of "Colonel Jack," is of this description. The beginning of "Colonel Jack" is the most affecting

natural picture of a young thief, that was ever drawn. His losing the stolen money in the hollow tree, and finding it again when in despair; and then being in equal distress at not knowing how to dispose of it, and several similar touches in the early history of the Colonel, evince a deep knowledge of human nature; and putting out of question the superior romantic interest of the latter, in my mind very much exceeds Crusoe. "Roxana" (first edition) is the next in interest; though he left out the best part of it in subsequent editions, from a foolish hypercriticism of his friend Southerne. But "Moll Flanders," the "Account of the Plague," &c. &c., are all of one family, and have the same stamp of character.

It has happened not seldom that one work of some author has so transcendently surpassed in execution the rest of his compositions, that the world has agreed to pass a sentence of dismissal upon the latter, and to consign them to total neglect and oblivion. It has done wisely in this not to suffer the contemplation of excellencies of a lower standard to abate or stand in the way of the pleasure it has agreed to receive from the masterpiece.

Again: it has happened, that from no inferior merit of execution in the rest, but from superior good fortune in the choice of its subject, some single work shall have been suffered to eclipse and cast into shade the deserts of its less fortunate brethren. This has been done with more or less injustice in the case of the popular allegory of Bunyan, in which the beautiful and scriptural image of a pilgrim or wayfarer (we are all such upon earth), addressing itself intelligibly and feelingly to the bosoms of all, has silenced, and made almost to be forgotten, the more awful and scarcely less tender beauties of the "Holy War made by Shaddai upon Diabolus," of the same author,—a romance less happy in its subject, but surely well worthy of a secondary immortality. But in no instance has this excluding partiality been exerted with more unfairness than against what may be termed the secondary novels or romances of Defoe.

While all ages and descriptions of people hang delighted over the "Adventures of Robinson Crusoe," and shall continue to do so, we trust while the world lasts, how few comparatively will bear to be told that there exist other fictitious narratives by the same writer,—four of them at least of no inferior interest, except what results from a less felicitous choice of situation. "Roxana," "Singleton," "Moll Flanders," "Colonel Jack," are all genuine offspring of the same father. They bear the veritable impress of Defoe. An unpractised midwife that would not swear to the nose, lip, forehead, and eye of every one of them! They are, in their way, as full of incident, and some of them every bit as romantic; only they want the uninhabited island, and the charm that has bewitched the world, of the striking solitary situation.

But are there no solitudes out of the cave and the desert? or cannot the heart in the midst of crowds feel frightfully alone? Singleton on the world of waters, prowling about with pirates less merciful than the creatures of any howling wilderness,—is he not alone, with the faces of men about him, but without a guide that can conduct him through the mists of educational and habitual ignorance, or a fellow-heart that can interpret to him the new-born yearnings and aspirations of unpractised penitence? Or when the boy Colonel Jack, in the loneliness of the heart (the worst solitude), goes to hide his ill-purchased treasure in the hollow tree by night, and miraculously loses, and miraculously finds it again,—whom hath he there to sympathize with him? or of what sort are his associates?

The narrative manner of Defoe has a naturalness about it beyond that of any other novel or romance writer. His fictions have all the air of true stories. It is impossible to believe, while you are reading them, that a real person is not narrating to you everywhere nothing but what really happened to himself. To this the extreme *homeliness* of their style mainly contributes. We use the word in its best and heartiest sense,—that which comes *home* to the reader.

The narrators everywhere are chosen from low life, or have had their origin in it: therefore they tell their own tales (Mr. Coleridge has anticipated us in this remark), as persons in their degree are observed to do, with infinite repetition, and an overacted exactness, lest the hearer should not have minded, or have forgotten, some things that had been told before. Hence the emphatic sentences marked in the good old (but deserted) Italic type; and hence, too, the frequent interposition of the reminding old colloquial parenthesis, "I say," "Mind," and the like, when the story-teller repeats what, to a practised reader, might appear to have been sufficiently insisted upon before: which made an ingenious critic observe, that his works, in this kind, were excellent reading for the kitchen. And, in truth, the heroes and heroines of Defoe can never again hope to be popular with a much higher class of readers than that of the servant-maid or the sailor. Crusoe keeps its rank only by tough prescription. Singleton, the pirate; Colonel Jack, the thief; Moll Flanders, both thief and harlot; Roxana, harlot and something worse,—would be startling ingredients in the bill of fare of modern literary delicacies. But, then, what pirates, what thieves, and what harlots, are *the thief*, *the harlot*, and *the pirate* of Defoe! We would not hesitate to say, that in no other book of fiction, where the lives of such characters are described, is guilt and delinquency made less seductive, or the suffering made more closely to follow the commission, or the penitence more earnest or more bleeding, or the intervening flashes of religious visitation upon the rude and uninstructed soul more meltingly and fearfully painted. They, in this, come near to the tenderness of Bunyan; while the livelier pictures and incidents in them, as in Hogarth or in Fielding, tend to diminish the fastidiousness to the concerns and pursuits of common life which an unrestrained passion for the ideal and the sentimental is in danger of producing.

# Recollections of a Late Royal Academician.

(*The Englishman's Magazine*, September, 1831.)

WHAT Apelles was to the *Grecian Alexander*, the same to the *Russian* was the late George Dawes. None but Apelles might attempt the lineaments of the world's conqueror; none but our Academician could have done justice to the lines to the Czar, and his courtiers. There they hang, the labour of ten plodding years, in an endless gallery, erected for the nonce, in the heart of Imperial Petersburgh—eternal monuments of barbarian taste submitted to half-civilized cunning—four hundred fierce Half-Lengths, all male, and all military; like the pit in a French theatre, or the characters in Timon as it was last acted, with never a woman among them. Chaste sitters to Vandyke, models of grace and womanhood; and thou Dame Venetia Digby, fairest among thy fair compeers at Windsor, hide your pure pale cheeks, and cool English beauties, before this suffocating horde of Scythian riflers, this male chaos! Your cold oaken frames shall wane before the gorgeous buildings,

> With Tartar faces throng'd, and horrent uniforms.

One emperor contended for the monopoly of the *ancient;* two were competitors at once for the pencil of the *modern Apelles*. The Russian carried it

against the Haytian by a single length. And if fate, as it was at one time nearly arranged, had wafted D. to the shores of Hayti—with the same complacency, in his art, with which he persisted in daubing in, day after day, his frozen Muscovites, he would have sate down for life to smutch in upon canvas the faces of blubber-lipped sultanas, or the whole male retinue of the dingy court of Christophe. For in truth a choice of subjects was the least of D.'s care. A Goddess from Cnidus, or from the Caffre coast, was equal to him; Lot or Lot's wife; the charming widow H., or her late husband.

My acquaintance with D. was in the outset of his art, when the graving tools, rather than the pencil, administered to his humble wants. Those implements, as is well known, are not the most favourable to the cultivation of that virtue, which is esteemed next to godliness. He might "wash his hands in innocency," and so metaphorically "approach an altar;" but his material puds were anything but fit to be carried to church. By an ingrained economy in soap—if it was not for pictorial effect rather—he would wash (on Sundays) the inner oval, or portrait, as it may be termed, of his countenance, leaving the unwashed temples to form a natural black frame round the picture, in which a dead white was the predominant colour. This, with the addition of green spectacle, made necessary by the impairment, which his graving labours by day and night (for he was ordinarily at them for sixteen hours out of the twenty-four) had brought upon his visual faculties, gave him a singular appearance, when he took the air abroad; insomuch, that I have seen a crowd of young men and boys following him along Oxford Street with admiration not without shouts; even as the Youth of Rome, we read in Vasari, followed the steps of Raphael with acclamations for his genius, and for his beauty, when he proceeded from his workshop to chat with Cardinals and Popes at the Vatican.

The family of D. were not at this time in affluent circumstances. His father, a clever artist, had outlived the style of art in which he excelled most of his contemporaries. He, with the father of the celebrated Morland, worked for the shop of Carrington and Bowles, which exists still for the poorer sort of caricatures, on the north side of St. Paul's Church Yard. They did clever things in colours. At an inn in Reading a screen is still preserved, full of their labours; but the separate portions of either artist are now undistinguishable. I remember a mother teaching her child to read (B. Barton has a copy of it); a laundress washing; a young Quaker, a beautiful subject. But the flower of their forgotten productions hangs still at a public-house on the left hand, as thou arrivest, reader, from the now Highgate archway, at the foot of the descent where Crouch End begins, on thy road to green Hornsey. Turn in, and look at it, for the sight is well worth a cup of excusatory cyder. In the parlour to the right you will find it—an antiquated subject—a damsel sitting at her breakfast table in a gown of the flowered chintz of our grandmothers, with a tea-service before her of the *same pattern*. The effect is most delicate. Why have these harmonies—these *agrémens*—no place in the works of modern art?

With such niceties in his calling D. did not much trouble his head, but, after an ineffectual experiment to reconcile his eye-sight with his occupation, boldly quitted it, and dashed into the beaten road of common-place portraiture in oil. The Hopners, and the Lawrences, were his Vandykes, and his Velasquezes; and if he could make anything like them, he insured himself immortality. With such guides he struggled on through laborious nights and days, till he reached the eminence he aimed at—of mediocrity.—Having gained that summit, he sate down contented. If the features were but cognoscible, no matter whether the flesh resembled flesh, or oil-skin. For the thousand tints—the grains—which in life diversify the nose, the chin, the cheek—which a Reynolds can but coarsely counterfeit—he cared nothing at all about them. He left such scrupulosities to opticians and anatomists. If the features

were but there, the character of course could not be far off. A lucky hit which he made in painting the very *dress* of a dressy lady—Mrs. W—e—, whose handsome countenance also, and tall elegance of shape, were too palpable entirely to escape under any masque of oil, with which even D. could overlay them—brought to him at once an influx of sitters, which almost rivalled the importunate calls upon Sir Thomas. A portrait he *did* soon after, of the Princess Charlotte, clenched his fame. He proceeded Academician. At that memorable conjunctnre of time it pleased the Allied Sovereigns to visit England.

I called upon D. to congratulate him upon a crisis so doubly eventful. His pleasant housekeeper seemed embarrassed; owned that her master was alone. But could he be spoken with? With some importunity I prevailed upon her to usher me into his painting-room. It was in Newman Street. At his easel stood D., with an immense spread of canvas before him, and by his side a—live goose. I inquired into this extraordinary combination. Under the rose he informed me, that he had undertaken to paint a transparency for Vauxhall, against an expected visit of the Allied Sovereigns to that place. I smiled at an engagement so derogatory to his new-born honours; but a contempt of small gains was never one of D.'s foibles. My eyes beheld crude forms of warriors, kings, rising under his brush upon this interminable stretch of cloth. The Wolga, the Don, and the Nieper, were there, or their representative River Gods; and Father Thames clubbed urns with the Vistula. Glory with her dazzling eagle were not absent, nor Fame, nor Victory. The shade of Rubens might have evoked the mighty allegories. But what was the Goose? He was evidently *sitting* for a something.

D. at last informed me, that having fixed upon a group of rivers, he could not introduce the Royal Thames without his *swans*. That he had inquired the price of a live swan, and it being more than he was prepared to give for it, he had bargained with the poulterer for the *next thing to it;* adding significantly, that it would do to roast, after it had served its turn to paint swans by. *Reader, this is a true story.*

So entirely devoid of imagination, or any feeling for his high art, was this *Painter*, that for the few historical pictures he attempted, any sitter might sit for any character. He took once for a subject *The Infant Hercules.* Did he choose for a model some robust antique? No. He did not even pilfer from Sir Joshua, who was nearer to his own size. But from a *show* he hired to sit to him a child in years indeed (though no Infant), but in fact a precocious *Man*, or human portent, that was disgustingly exhibiting at that period; a thing to be strangled. From this he formed *his* Infant Hercules. In a scriptural flight he next attempted a Samson in the lap of Dalilah. A Dalilah of some sort was procurable for love or money, but who should stand for the Jewish Hercules? He hired a tolerably stout porter, with a thickish head of hair. curling in yellowish locks, but lithe—much like a wig. And these were the robust strengths of Samson.

I once was a witness to a *family scene* in his painting closet, which I had entered rather abruptly, and but for his encouragement, should as hastily have retreated. He stood with displeased looks eyeing a female relative—whom I had known under happier auspices—that was kneeling at his feet with a baby in her arms, with her eyes uplifted and suppliant. Though I could have previously sworn to the virtue of Miss ——, yet casual slips have been known. There are such things as families disgraced, where least you would have expected it. The child *might* be———; I had heard of no wedding—I was the last person to pry into family secrets—when D. relieved my uneasy cogitations by explaining, that the innocent, good-humoured creature before me (such as she ever was, and is now that she is married) with a baby borrowed from a public-house, was acting Andromache to *his* Ulysses, for the purpose of transferring upon canvas a tender situation from the Troades of Seneca.

On a subsequent occasion I knocked at D.'s door. I had chanced to have been in a dreamy humour previously. I am not one that often poetises, but I had been musing—coxcombically enough in the heart of Newman Street, Oxford Road—upon Pindus, and the Aonian Maids. The Lover of Daphne was in my mind—when, answering to my summons, the door opened, and there stood before me, laurel-crowned, the God himself, unshorn Apollo. I was beginning to mutter apologies to the Celestial Presence—when on the thumb of the right hand of the Delian (his left held the harp) I spied a palette, such as painters carry, which immediately reconciled me to the whimsical transformation of my old acquaintance—with his own face, certainly any other than Grecianesque—into a temporary image of the oracle-giver of Delphos. To have impersonated the Ithacan was little: he had been just sitting for a God. —It would be no incurious inquiry to ascertain what the *minimum* of the faculty of imagination, ever supposed essential to painters along with poets, is, that, in these days of complaints of want of patronage towards the fine arts, suffices to dub a man a R——l A———n.

Not only had D. no imagination to guide him in the treatment of such subjects, but he had no relish for high art in the productions of the great masters. He turned away from them as from something foreign and irrelative to him, and his calling. He knew he had neither part nor portion in them. Cozen him into the Stafford or the Angerstein Gallery, he involuntarily turned away from the Baths of Diana—the Four Ages of Guercino—the Lazarus of Piombo—to some pretty piece of *modern art* that had been inconsistently thrust into the collection through favour. On that he would dwell and pore, blind as the dead to the delicacies that surrounded him. There he might learn something. There he might pilfer a little. There was no grappling with Titian, or Angelo.

The narrowness of his domestic habits to the very last, was the consequence of his hard bringing up, and unexpected emergence into opulence. While rolling up to the ears in Russian roubles, a penny was still in his eyes the same important thing, which it had with some reason seemed to be, when a few shillings were his daily earnings. When he visited England a short time before his death, he reminded an artist of a commission, which he had executed for him in Russia, the package of which was "still unpaid." At this time he was not unreasonably supposed to have realized a sum little short of half a million sterling. What became of it was never known; what gulf, or what Arctic *vorago*, sucked it in, his acquaintance in those parts have better means of guessing, than his countrymen. It is certain that few of the latter were anything the better for it.

It was before he expatriated himself, but subsequently to his acquisition of pictorial honours in this country, that he brought home two of his brother Academicians to dine with him. He had given no orders extraordinary to his housekeeper. He trusted, as he always did, to her providing. She was a shrewd lass, and knew, as we say, a bit of her master's mind.

It had happened that on the day before, D. passing near Clare Market by one of those open shambles, where tripe and cow-heel are exposed for sale, his eye was arrested by the sight of some tempting flesh *rolled up*. It is a part of the intestines of some animal, which my olfactory sensibilities never permitted me to stay long enough to inquire the name of. D. marked the curious involutions of the unacquainted luxury; the harmony of its colours—a *sable vert*—pleased his eye; and, warmed with the prospect of a new flavour, for a few farthings he bore it off in triumph to his housekeeper. It so happened that his day's dinner was provided, so the cooking of the novelty was for that time necessarily suspended.

Next day came. The hour of dinner approached. His visitors, with no very romantic anticipations, expected a plain meal at least; they were prepared

for no new dainties; when, to the astonishment of them, and almost of D. himself, the purchase of the preceding day was served up piping hot—the cook declaring, that she did not know well what it was, for "her master always marketed." His guests were not so happy in their ignorance. They kept dogs.

I will do D. the justice to say, that on such occasions he took what happened in the best humour possible. He had no *false modesty*—though I have generally observed, that persons, who are quite deficient in that *mauvaise honte*, are seldom over-troubled with the quality itself, of which it is the counterfeit.

By what arts, with *his* pretensions, D. contrived to wriggle himself into a seat in the Academy, I am not acquainted enough with the intrigues of that body (more involved than those of an Italian conclave) to pronounce. It is certain, that neither for love to him, nor out of any respect to his talents, did they elect him. Individually he was obnoxious to them all. I have heard that, in his passion for attaining this object, he went so far as to go down upon his knees to some of the members, whom he thought least favourable, and beg their suffrage with many tears.

But *death*, which extends the measure of a man's stature to appearance; and *wealth*, which men worship in life and death, which makes giants of punies, and embalms insignificance; called around the exequies of this pigmy Painter the rank, the riches, the fashion of the world. By Academic hands his pall was borne; by the carriages of nobles of the land, and of ambassadors from foreign powers, his bier was followed; and St. Paul's (O worthy casket for the shrine of such a Zeuxis) now holds—ALL THAT WAS MORTAL OF G. D.

# Table-Talk, by the Late Elia.

(*The Athenæum*, 4 January, 1834.)

THE greatest pleasure I know, is to do a good action by stealth, and to have it found out by accident.

'Tis unpleasant to meet a beggar. It is painful to deny him; and, if you relieve him, it is so much out of your pocket.

Men marry for fortune, and sometimes to please their fancy; but, much oftener than is suspected, they consider what the world will say of it,—how such a woman in their friends' eyes will look at the head of a table. Hence we see so many insipid beauties made wives of, that could not have struck the particular fancy of any man that had any fancy at all. These I call *furniture wives*; as men buy *furniture pictures*, because they suit this or that niche in their dining parlours.

Your universally cried-up beauties are the very last choice which a man of taste would make. What pleases all, cannot have that individual charm which makes this or that countenance engaging to you, and to you only perhaps, you know not why. What gained the fair Gunnings titled husbands, who, after all, turned out very sorry wives? Popular repute.

It is a sore trial when a daughter shall marry against her father's approbation. A little hardheartedness, and aversion to a reconcilement, is almost pardonable. After all, Will Dockwray's way is, perhaps, the wisest. His best-loved daughter made a most imprudent match ; in fact, eloped with the last man in the world that her father would have wished her to marry. All the world said that he would never speak to her again. For months she durst not write to him, much less come near him. But, in a casual rencounter, he met her in the streets of Ware,—Ware, that will long remember the mild virtues of William Dockwray, Esq. What said the parent to his disobedient child, whose knees faltered under her at the sight of him? "Ha, Sukey! is it you?" with that benevolent aspect with which he paced the streets of Ware, venerated as an angel: "come and dine with us on Sunday;" then turning away, and again turning back, as if he had forgotten something, he added, "and, Sukey, do you hear, bring your husband with you." This was all the reproof she ever heard from him. Need it be added, that the match turned out better for Susan than the world expected?

"We read the "Paradise Lost" as a task," says Dr. Johnson. Nay, rather as a celestial recreation, of which the dullard mind is not at all hours alike recipient. "Nobody ever wished it longer," nor the moon rounder, he might have added. Why, 'tis the perfectness and completeness of it which makes us imagine that not a line could be added to it, or diminished from it with advantage. Would we have a cubit added to the stature of the Medicean Venus? Do we wish her taller?

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(*The Athenæum*, 31 May, 1834.)

"*Lear.* Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best. I'll tell you straight.
Are you not Kent?
*Kent.* The same; your servant Kent.
Where is your servant Caius?
*Lear.* 'Twas a good fellow, I can tell you that:
He'd strike, and quickly too: he is dead and rotten.
*Kent.* No, my good lord: I am the very man—
*Lear.* I'll see that straight—
*Kent.* That from your first of difference and decay
Have follow'd your sad steps.
*Lear.* You are welcome hither.
*Albany.* He knows not what he says; and vain is it
That we present us to him.
*Edgar.* Look up, my lord.
*Kent.* Vex not his ghost. O let him pass. He hates him,
That would upon the rack of this rough world
Stretch him out longer."

So ends *King Lear*, the most stupendous of the Shaksperian dramas; and Kent, the noblest feature of the conceptions of his divine mind. This is the magnanimity of authorship, when a writer, having a topic presented to him, fruitful of beauties for common minds, waives his privilege, and trusts to the judicious few for understanding the reason of his abstinence. What a pudder would a common dramatist have raised here of a reconciliation scene, a perfect recognition, between the assumed Caius and his master!—to the suffusing of many fair eyes, and the moistening of cambric handkerchiefs. The old dying king partially catching at the truth, and immediately lapsing into obliviousness, with the high-minded carelessness of the other to have his services appreciated,—as one that—

"Served not for gain,
Or follow'd out of form,"—

are among the most judicious, not to say heart-touching strokes in Shakspere.

Allied to this magnanimity it is, where the pitch and point of an argument, the amplification of which might compromise the modesty of the speaker, is delivered briefly, and as it were, *parenthetically;* as in those few but pregnant words, in which the man in the old "Nut-brown Maid" rather intimates than reveals his unsuspected high birth to the woman :—

> "Now understand, to Westmoreland,
> *Which is my heritage,*
> I will you bring, and with a ring
> By way of marriage,
> I will you take and lady make."

Turn we to the aversion of it, ten times diluted, of dear Mat Prior,—in his own way unequalled, and a poet now-a-days too much neglected. "In me," quoth Henry, addressing the astounded Emma,—with a flourish and an attitude, as we may conceive,—

> "In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,
> Illustrious Earl! him terrible in war,
> Let Loire confess."

And with a deal of skimble-skamble stuff, as Hotspur would term it, more, presents the lady with a full and true enumeration of his papa's rent-roll in the fat soil by Deva.

But, of all parentheses (not to quit the topic too suddenly), commend me to that most significant one, at the commencement of the old popular ballad of "Fair Rosamund :"—

> "When good King Henry ruled this land,
> The second of that name,"

Now mark,—

> "(Besides the Queen) he dearly loved
> A fair and comely dame."

There is great virtue in this *besides.*

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Amidst the complaints of the wide spread of infidelity among us, it is consolatory that a sect is sprung up in the heart of the metropolis, and is daily on the increase, of teachers of that healing doctrine which Pope upheld, and against which Voltaire directed his envenomed wit: we mean those practical preachers of optimism, or the belief that *whatever is is best;* the cads of omnibuses, who from their little back pulpits, not once in three or four hours, as those proclaimers of "God and his prophet" in Mussulman countries, but every minute, at the entry or exist of a brief passenger, are heard, in an almost prophetic tone, to exclaim (Wisdom crying out, as it were, in the streets), "ALL'S RIGHT!"

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(*The Athenæum,* 7th June, 1834.)

Advice is not so commonly thrown away as is imagined. We seek it in difficulties. But in common speech we are apt to confound with it *admonition;* as when a friend reminds one that drink is prejudicial to the health, &c. We do not care to be told of that which we know better than the good man that admonishes. M—— sent to his friend L——, who is no water drinker, a twopenny tract "Against the Use of Fermented Liquors." L—— acknowledged the obligation, as far as to *twopence.* Penetier's advice was the safest, after all:—

"I advised him——"

But I must tell you. The dear, good-meaning, no-thinking creature had been dumb-founding a company of us with a detail of inextricable difficulties, in which the circumstances of an acquaintance of his were involved. No clue of light offered itself. He grew more and more misty as he proceeded. We pitied his friend, and thought,—

"God help the man so wrapt in error's endless maze:"

when, suddenly brightening up his placid countenance like one that had found out a riddle, and looked to have the solution admired,—

"At last," said he, "I advised him"—

Here he paused, and here we were again interminably thrown back. By no possible guess could any of us aim at the drift of the meaning he was about to be delivered of.

"I advised him," he repeated, "to have some *advice* upon the subject."

A general approbation followed; and it was unanimously agreed, that, under all the circumstances of the case, no sounder or more judicious counsel could have been given

A laxity pervades the popular use of words.

Parson W—— is not quite so continent as Diana, yet prettily dissembleth his frailty. Is Parson W——, therefore, a *hypocrite?* I think *not.* Where the concealment of a vice is less pernicious than the bare-faced publication of it would be, no additional delinquency is incurred in the secrecy. Parson W—— is simply an immoral clergyman. But if Parson W—— were to be for ever haranguing on the opposite virtue; choosing for his perpetual text, in preference to all other pulpit-topics, the remarkable resistance recorded in the 39th of Exodus; dwelling, moreover, and dilating upon it,—then Parson W—— might be reasonably suspected of hypocrisy. But Parson W—— rarely diverteth into such line of argument, or toucheth it briefly. His ordinary topics are fetched from "obedience to the powers that are," "submission to the civil magistrate in all commands that are not absolutely unlawful;" on which he can delight to expatiate with equal fervour and sincerity.

Again: to *despise* a person is properly to *look down* upon him with none or the least possible emotion. But when Clementina, who has lately lost her lover, with bosom heaving, eyes flashing, and her whole frame in agitation, pronounces with a peculiar emphasis that she "*despises* the fellow," depend upon it that he is not quite so despicable in her eyes as she would have us imagine.

One more instance: If we must naturalize that portentous phrase, *a truism*, it were well that we limited the use of it. Every commonplace or trite observation is not a truism. For example: A good name helps a man on in the world. This is nothing but a simple truth, however hackneyed. It has a distinct subject and predicate. But when the thing predicated is involved in the term of the subject, and so necessarily involved that by no possible conception they can be separated, then it becomes a truism; as to say, "A good name is a proof of a man's estimation in the world." We seem to be saying something when we say nothing. I was describing to F—— some knavish tricks of a mutual friend of ours. "If he did so and so," was the reply, "he cannot be an honest man." Here was a genuine truism, truth upon truth, inference and proposition identical; or rather a dictionary definition usurping the place of an inference.

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(*The Athenæum*, 19th July, 1834.)

The vices of some men are magnificent. Compare the amours of Henry the Eighth and Charles the Second. The Stuart had mistresses: the Tudor *kept* wives.

We are ashamed at sight of a monkey,—somehow as we are shy of poor relations.

C—— imagined a Caledonian compartment in Hades, where there should be fire without sulphur.

Absurd images are sometimes irresistible. I will mention two,—an elephant in a coach-office gravely coming to have his trunk booked; a mermaid over a fish-kettle cooking her own tail.

It is the praise of Shakspere, with reference to the play-writers, his contemporaries, that he has so few revolting characters. Yet he has one that is singularly mean and disagreeable,—the king in *Hamlet*. Neither has he characters of insignificance, unless the phantom that stalks over the stage, as Julius Cæsar, in the play of that name, may be accounted one. Neither has he envious characters, excepting the short part of Don John, in *Much Ado about Nothing*. Neither has he unentertaining characters, if we except Parolles, and the little that there is of the Clown, in *All's Well that Ends Well*.

It would settle the dispute as to whether Shakspere intended Othello for a jealous character, to consider how differently we are affected towards him, and Leontes in the *Winter's Tale*. Leontes *is* that character. Othello's fault was simply credulity.

Is it possible that Shakspere should never have read Homer, in Chapman's version at least? If he had read it, could he mean to *travesty* it in the parts of those big boobies, Ajax and Achilles? Ulysses, Nestor, and Agamemnon are true to their parts in the *Iliad*: they are gentlemen at least. Thersites, though unamusing, is fairly deducible from it. *Troilus and Cressida* are a fine graft upon it. But those two big bulks—

It is a desideratum in works that treat *de re culinaria*, that we have no *rationale* of sauces or theory of mixed flavours: as to show why cabbage is reprehensible with roast beef, laudable with bacon; why the haunch of mutton seeks the alliance of currant jelly, the shoulder civilly declineth it; why loin of veal (a pretty problem), being itself unctuous, seeketh the adventitious lubricity of melted butter,—and why the same part in pork, not more oleaginous, abhorreth from it; why the French bean sympathizes with the flesh of deer; why salt fish points to parsnip, brawn makes a dead-set at mustard; why cats prefer valerian to heart's-ease, old ladies *vice versâ*,—though this is rather traveling out of the road of the dietetics, and may be thought a question more curious than relevant; why salmon (a strong sapor *per se*) fortifieth its condition with the mighty lobster sauce, whose embraces are fatal to the delicater relish of the turbot; why oysters in death rise up against the contamination of brown sugar, while they are posthumously amorous of vinegar; why the sour mango and the sweet jam by turns court and are accepted by the compliable mutton hash,—she not yet decidedly declaring for either. We are as yet but in the empirical stage of cookery. We feed ignorantly, and want to be able to give a reason of the relish that is in us; so that, if Nature should furnish us with a new meat, or be prodigally pleased to restore the phœnix, upon a *given* flavour, we might be able to pronounce instantly, on philosophical principles, what the sauce to it should be,—what the curious adjuncts.

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